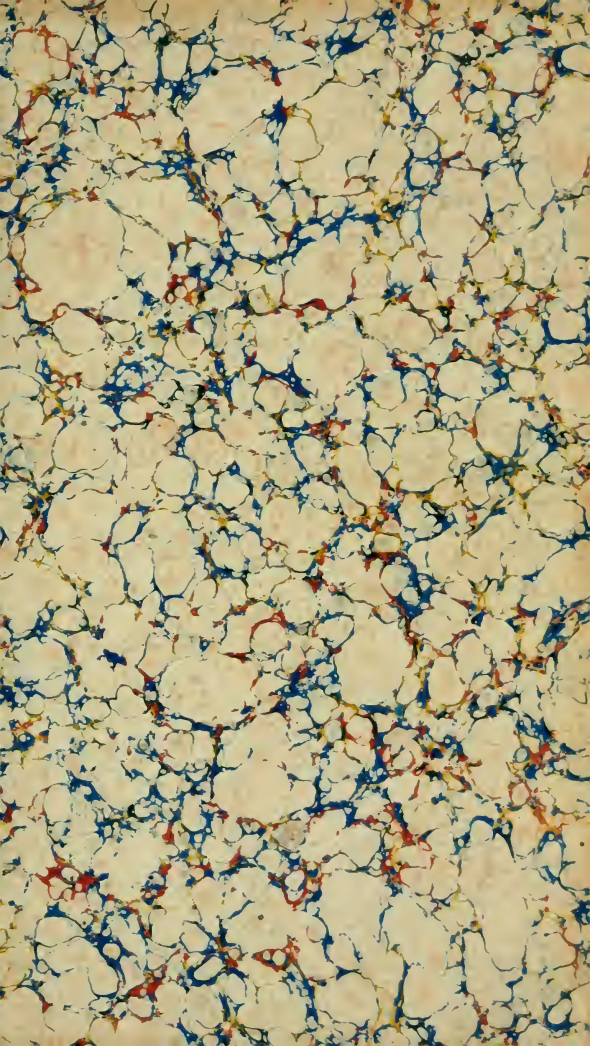






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Isabel Robertson



A

CHRISTIAN'S GIFT

TO A

CHRISTIAN FRIEND:

A Selection of

RELIGIOUS AND PRECEPTIVE EXTRACTS,

IN PROSE AND VERSE.

CARLISLE:

PUBLISHED BY HUDSON SCOTT:

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P R E F A C E.

IN introducing this little work to the notice of the public, the Editor is aware that many productions have lately issued from the press similar in design, but he considers the varied field of literature so extensive, that were they even much more numerous, there would still be room to cull a garland, fresh and varied, for the presentation of friendship, or the memorial of affection.

The selection is principally of a religious nature, containing sentiments and extracts from the most eminent Christian authors; and the editorial part of the work has been, to collect together a few beautiful and impressive fragments, (such as we

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cull for our album or scrap-book), and by presenting them in a new and neat style of typography, to form an elegant and acceptable annual offering.

An examination of the Work will determine whether the Editor has succeeded in his object, of presenting to the Public a volume selected with judgment and taste, and calculated to lure us to the love and practice of virtue.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Man designed for a future state of existence BATES.	1
God	4
Deism JOHNSON.	7
On Happiness BOWDLER.	8
On Christian Perfection BOWDLER.	10
The Towers of Intellect E. WARING.	12
My Father's at the Helm	14
Anecdote of Archbishop Usher	15
Paul in a Strait STERNHOLD.	17
Definition of Religion by an Ame- rican Minister J. SCOTT.	18
Benevolence	22
On Resignation	22
On Candour BOWDLER.	25
The Sabbath Bell	26
Man formed for Eternity R. HALL.	28
The Sundew	30
Exalted Society, and the Renewal of Virtuous Connexions, &c. BLAIR.	31
Compassion	32

	PAGE
The Triumph of Deism	A. REED. 33
On the Mysteries of Revelation	W. ORME. 35
Reflection	CRABBE. 35
On the Bible	W. B. COLLYER. 39
The Beauty and Wisdom of the Creation	BLAIR. 41
Sabbath Morning	46
To an Infant	47
Fixed Principles Indispensable	BLAIR. 47
The Man of Integrity	BLAIR. 50
Temperance	W. PENN. 51
Philosophy unable to teach us Truth	COWPER. 52
Precepts for Youth	BLAIR. 54
Elijah	58
On Conversation	A. H. 61
A Summer Morning's Meditation	66
Archbishop Leighton on Prayer	67
Thralldom	72
Freedom	COWPER. 73
Dress	HERVEY. 80
Character of the great Founder of Christianity	DR. BEATTIE. 81
On the Beauties of the Psalms	HORNE. 83
On the true Honour of Man	BLAIR. 84
Thoughts on Mortality	KNOX. 87
Behold my Mother and my Bre- thren	88
Innocence	88

	PAGE
Time	KIRKE WHITE. 89
Majesty of God in his Works .	STURM. 94
The Nominal Christian defective	
in Love to God	WILBERFORCE. 95
Pleasures of Science . . .	BROUGHAM. 97
The Delusions of Life . . .	KIRKE WHITE. 99
Vanity inscribed on all Things .	WATTS. 103
Praise waiteth for Thee, O God,	
in Sion	WATTS. 108
Reflections suggested in Silent	
Worship	AMELIA OPIE. 113
On Divine Worship	BATES. 114
Jehovah's Shammah	115
Testimonials of the Heathen to the	
Influence of the Holy Spirit .	BATES. 117
The Rainbow	J. HOLLAND. 118
On the Vastness of the Universe	WHEWELL. 120
Omnipotence	KNOX. 129
The Divine Mission of Jesus, &c.	PALEY. 131
Ubiquity	KNOX. 135
The Flood	KNOX. 136
Reflections—On Prayer . . .	KIRKE WHITE. 138
Stanzas	MOORE. 147
The Creator of the Physical is the	
Governor of the Moral World	WHEWELL. 148
The Altar's Simplicity . . .	BARTON. 159
Discussion on the Punishment of	
Death, for Murder, &c.	TYERMAN AND BENNET. 160
Sonnet	KIRKE WHITE. 166

	PAGE
The Christian Virgin's Address to her Apostate Lover . . .	DALE. 166
Authority of the Conscience . .	DYMOND. 168
The Surrender of the Heart . .	M. BROWNE. 172
Conviction and Pardon . . .	COWPER. 173
On Religious Convictions . . .	JEWSBURY. 175
The Infant's Dream . . .	179
"It is good to be here" . . .	H. KNOWLES. 183
Natural Religion and Christianity	CHALMERS. 185
The World in the Heart . . .	JANE TAYLOR. 192
War	SOAME JENYNS. 195
Rachel—A True Story . . .	M. BRIDGES. 198
The Image of his Creator in Man	WOLFE. 203
On Sceptical Levity in matters of Religion	DR. R. BURNS. 208
Wisdom, Divine and Human . .	T. HANCOCK. 211
Bridal Greetings	MONTGOMERY. 220
A Thought on the Sea Shore . .	CONDER. 221
Fragment	H. R. 222
Hymn of Thanksgiving for the Close of the Year	STURM. 223

A CHRISTIAN'S GIFT.

MAN DESIGNED FOR A FUTURE STATE OF EXISTENCE.

THOUGH human reason could never lead the mind up to an acquaintance with God, his *attributes*, and his *will* concerning us; with the means which he has provided for our redemption, or the existence of the soul after death; yet, these things being revealed or brought to light by the Gospel, are supported by the testimony of unperturbed reason.

But to my mind, one of the most conclusive arguments in favour of Divine Revelation, is, that it goes beyond the evidences of the senses, or the discoveries of human reason. It is an important argument in favour of Reason, that it opens to us a wide field of knowledge, of action, and of enjoyment, which lies beyond the reach of the senses. For this is one of the striking advantages that we enjoy above the brute creation. The same mode of reasoning will apply to Divine Revelation, as

exalting our condition above what it could possibly be, if we possessed no higher principle than reason. For though reason enlarges our sphere of action, of usefulness, and of enjoyment; yet it also unfolds to us the miseries to which we are heirs, more fully than the brute creation can be made sensible of. The ox is led unconscious to the slaughter, and feels nothing of the terrors of anticipation. We see the powerful causes of *change*, *disappointment*, and *affliction*, that surround us. Were there nothing for the mind to rest upon, but such objects as come within the reach of the senses, and the calculations of human reason, we should be miserable indeed. It is, therefore, a source of peculiar gratitude, that "life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel." The beasts possess the faculties of sense. Man, though he possesses these faculties in an inferior degree, still rises above the brute creation, by the exercise of reason. This gives him a commanding advantage over the rest of animated nature; but it is only a partial advantage. Though it enlarges his knowledge, his powers, and his enjoyments, it also abundantly enlarges his sphere of sufferings and distress. It therefore still remains for Divine Revelation to direct his views, to regulate his affections and pursuits; and to give animation to his hopes, and support to his mind, through all the vicissitudes that can attend him. For, as *Reason* leads to discoveries which never could be made by the senses, so *Revelation* unfolds to the believing mind, truths of infinite importance, which must have remained for ever hid from mere human reason. Without this source of intelligence, we are shut up in darkness. The philosopher may be as ignorant as the barbarian. With the refinements of civilized life, with the discoveries of science open to his view, he may be even more destitute

of knowledge in Divine things, than the Indian, the Hottentot, or the Hindoo. In all nations, and in all ages, "there is" and has been "a Spirit in man, and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Job xxxii. 8. As thus the capacity and the intelligence are received, we cannot contemplate the stupendous works of nature, or consider the order and harmony displayed in the visible creation, without feeling the concurrent testimony of nature and of reason, to the being of a God—his wisdom, goodness, power, and providence. Thus the apostle, speaking with reference to the Gentiles, says; "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. i. 20.

Finding ourselves placed in the vast repository of His works, made subservient to our wants, and promotive of our comfort; conscious too of a *mind*, rising above the *matériel* world, to its invisible and incomprehensible Author, we see much to impress the obligations of *gratitude*, *love*, and *adoration*, which are his due from us. Feeling these obligations, and, on looking around in the world, being able to find, not Him, but only the evidences that *He is*, we see the necessity of that communion with Him, by which we can become acquainted with his *will*, be enabled to *perform* it, and receive the consolation of his *immediate approbation*. Nor can we question the possibility of such a communion, between God, who is a Spirit, and the soul of man, that is a spirit also.

Beings, capable of such communion with the Deity, brought up into converse with Him, and leavened into his Divine nature, must be designed for more than

momentary existence. It cannot be supposed, that the soul which has been raised to this participation of the Divine nature, and which still, in humble hope and animating love, clings to its Father and its God, will, after a few fleeting moments, be cast out into utter annihilation. No principle of reason would lead to such a conclusion. And here, in the reflection on the weight of obligation we are under, the blessings we have received, and the high privileges conferred upon us, we must acknowledge "the exceeding sinfulness of sin." And while the mind looks, with a joyful assent, to an eternity of happiness, it cannot deny, however awful the idea, the possibility of an eternity, in a state of separation from the Divine presence.

BATES.

GOD.

O THOU eternal One ! whose presence bright
 All space doth occupy, all motion guide ;
 Unchanged through time's all devastating flight ;
 Thou only God ! there is no God beside !
 Being above all beings ! Mighty One !
 Whom none can comprehend and none explore ;
 Who fill'st existence with thyself alone
 Embracing all,—supporting,—ruling o'er,—
 Being whom we call God—and know no more !

In its sublime research, philosophy
 May measure out the ocean deep—may count
 The sands or the sun's rays—but God ! for Thee
 There is no weight nor measure :—none can mount
 Up to Thy mysteries ; Reason's brightest spark,

Though kindled by Thy light, in vain would try
 To trace Thy counsels, infinite and dark :
 And thought is lost ere thought can soar so high,
 Even like past moments in eternity.

Thou from primeval nothingness didst call
 First chaos, then existence ;—Lord ! on Thee
 Eternity had its foundation ;—all
 Sprung forth from Thee :—of light, joy, harmony,
 Sole origin,—all life, all beauty Thine.
 Thy word created all, and doth create ;
 Thy splendour fills all space with rays divine ;
 Thou art, and wert, and shalt be ! Glorious ! Great,
 Light-giving, life-sustaining Potentate !

Thy chains the unmeasured universe surround ;
 Upheld by Thee, by Thee inspired with breath !
 Thou the beginning with the end hast bound,
 And beautifully mingled life and death !
 As sparks mount upwards from the fiery blaze,
 So suns are born, so worlds spring forth from Thee ;
 And as the spangles in the sunny rays
 Shine round the silver snow, the pageantry
 Of heaven's bright army glitter in Thy praise.

A million torches lighted by Thy hand
 Wander unwearied through the blue abyss ;
 They own Thy power, accomplish Thy command,
 All gay with life, all eloquent with bliss.
 What shall we call them ? Piles of crystal light—
 A glorious company of golden streams—
 Lamps of celestial ether burning bright—
 Suns lighting systems with their joyous beams ;
 But Thou to these art as the moon to night.

Yes! as a drop of water in the sea,
 All this magnificence in Thee is lost;—
 What are ten thousand worlds compared to Thee?
 And what am I then? Heaven's unnumber'd host,
 Though multiplied by myriads, and array'd
 In all the glory of sublimest thought,
 Is but an atom in the balance weigh'd
 Against Thy greatness, is a cypher brought
 Against infinity! What am I then? Nought!

Nought! But the effluence of thy light divine,
 Pervading worlds, hath reach'd my bosom too;
 Yes! in my spirit doth Thy spirit shine
 As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.
 Nought,—but I live, and on Hope's pinions fly
 Eager towards Thy presence; for in Thee
 I live, and breathe, and dwell; aspiring high,
 Even to the throne of thy divinity.
 I am, O God! and surely *Thou* must be!

Thou art! directing, guiding all, Thou art!
 Direct my understanding then to Thee;
 Control my spirit, guide my wandering heart;
 Though but an atom midst intensity,
 Still I am something, fashioned by Thy hand!
 I hold a middle rank 'twixt heaven and earth,
 On the last verge of mortal being stand,
 Close to the realms where angels have their birth,
 Just on the boundaries of the spirit land!

The chain of being is complete in me;
 In me is matter's last gradation lost,
 And the next step is Spirit—Deity!
 I can command the lightning and am dust!

A monarch and a slave : a worm, a god !
 Whence came I here and how ? so marvellously
 Constructed and conceived ? unknown ! this clod
 Lives surely through some higher energy,
 For from itself alone it could not be !

Creator, yes ! Thy wisdom and Thy word
 Created *me* ! Thou source of life and good !
 Thou spirit of my spirit, and my Lord !
 Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plenitude,
 Filled me with an immortal soul—to spring
 Over the abyss of death, and bade it wear
 The garments of eternal day, and wing
 Its heavenly flight beyond this little sphere,
 Even to its source—to Thee—its Author there.

O thoughts ineffable ! O vision bless'd !
 Though worthless our conceptions all of Thee,
 Yet shall thy shadow'd image fill our breast,
 And waft its homage to Thy Deity.
 God ! thus alone my lowly thoughts can soar ;
 Thus seek Thy Presence—Being wise and good !
 Midst thy vast works admire, obey, adore .
 And when the tongue is eloquent no more,
 The soul shall speak in tears of gratitude.

DEISM.

No honest man can be a Deist ; for no man could be so after a fair examination of Christianity. Hume owned that he had never read the New Testament with attention. Christianity is the highest perfection of humanity.

JOHNSON.

ON HAPPINESS.

PERFECT happiness is not the lot of this life. To be constantly advancing towards it, continually aiming at it, and continually successful in that aim, is the utmost we can hope for here ; and this we may enjoy in every situation of life, where our affections are placed on the highest object : but we can never enjoy it constantly or securely, while they are fixed on any other. Are we afflicted ? Our greatest joy remains. Are we disappointed ? Our dearest hope cannot be taken away. Are we wounded by unkindness ? Our best Friend will comfort us. Are we oppressed by pain and difficulties ? Our Almighty Helper will support us. Are our good intentions misrepresented, and our best actions misinterpreted ? He who sees the heart will do us justice. Are we neglected and forsaken by the world ? He who made and rules the world is ready to receive us, and never will forsake us. Is every sorrow heaped upon us, and every earthly comfort snatched away ? The best of comforts yet remains, and an eternity of happiness awaits us.

How happy must be the situation of a rational creature, exerting all his powers for the best and noblest purposes, performing all the duties of his station, and making continual advances towards the perfection of his nature ; depending with humble confidence on the Divine assistance to support his weakness, and constantly and sincerely endeavouring to do the will of his Heavenly Father, who watches over him with far more than fatherly affection—who orders all events as shall be really best for him ; accepts his endeavours, forgives his imperfections, and leads him through all the various paths of life to everlasting happiness. How delightful

is the thought, that we are indeed the objects of his love and favour; that all events which can befall us, may be made the means of good; that we may flee to him as to a tender and faithful friend, in all our sorrows, in all our trials, and be certain of that comfort and assistance of which we stand in need!

This surely is happiness: and this may be enjoyed in every situation in which we can be placed in this world, for it is totally independent on outward circumstances. All that the world most values can never bestow it, nor afford true and lasting satisfaction without it; nor can the greatest afflictions ever take it away. If then, in the time of pleasure and success, we feel that something still is wanting to complete our happiness, and find our enjoyments disturbed by the dread of losing them; or, if in the time of affliction we are ready to sink beneath our burthen; when we are inclined to be dissatisfied or dejected, instead of giving way to such dispositions, let us think of the happiness of the state we have been describing, and ask ourselves, if such be really the picture of our situation? If it be, our pleasures may be enjoyed without anxiety; and, in the midst of every trial, we may say with confidence, "Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation;" and such joy "no man taketh from you." Affliction may be felt, human weakness may overcloud our joy for a time; but they cannot destroy it: superior to them all, it will constantly overbalance, and in the end entirely conquer them.

BOWDLER'S ESSAYS.

ON CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

Some good we can all do ; and if we do all that is in our power, however little that power may be, we have performed our part, and may be as near perfection as those whose influence extends over kingdoms, and whose good actions are felt and applauded by thousands. But then we must be sure that we do *all* we can, and exert to the utmost all those powers which God has given us ; and this is a point in which we are very apt to deceive ourselves, and to shelter our indolence under the pretence of inability.

Let us, then, in whatever situation in life we may be placed, consider attentively how we may improve it to the best advantage ; let us never be discouraged by any difficulty which may attend what we know to be our duty ; for if we do our best, we are secure of an All-powerful assistance ; nor let us ever think any occasion too trifling for the exertion of our best endeavours, for it is by constantly aiming at perfection, in every instance, that we may at length attain to as great a degree of it as our present state will admit of.

It may have happened to many, whose intentions were yet sincerely good, to be discouraged by the little apparent good that is in their power, and by the disappointments they may have met with in their endeavours to do even that little. But let such remember, that it is the intention, not the success, which constitutes the merit of any action ; and, whatever present pleasure they may lose by the disappointment of their honest endeavours, will, with infinite advantage, be made up to them hereafter.

They should also consider, that the applause of men, and even the secret self-approbation which attends a

successful good action, is not without its danger. Vanity is ever apt to steal in, and taint even our best performances, and that not only in such actions as are seen by the world, for there may be a vanity even in our own applause; and, when they find their best endeavours disappointed, and their greatest kindnesses received with indifference, and repaid with ingratitude, let them not be discouraged, but still go on in the blessed course in which they are engaged, constantly endeavouring to discover and improve every opportunity of doing good, however little it may appear, though no eye see them, and though no voice applaud them.

He who is higher than the highest, will mark their diligence, and crown hereafter their sincere endeavours, though he may see fit to humble them with disappointments here, and deprive them of the satisfaction of enjoying the good they do.

In whatever situation we may be placed, let us not enquire what allowances may be made for us, not how much we must do that we may hope for acceptance. But let us consider, what is the best that we can do, for we certainly have not performed our duty, when we are conscious that we might have done better.

By resigning our own will, upon every little occasion, when it opposes that of our Maker, we shall learn to do it in the greatest; and by constantly aiming at perfection, even in the smallest instances, we shall make daily advances towards it, till at last we arrive at that blessed state, where all our imperfections shall be done away, and perfect goodness, and perfect happiness, shall reign for ever.

BOWDLER'S ESSAYS.

THE TOWERS OF INTELLECT.

THE sun was just gone to his valley of night,
 And evening arose in her sombre hued vest,
 Her zone with the rubies of ether was bright,
 Her hair shone with gold, and on zephyrs so light
 Wav'd lovely and fair in the west.

As musing I saunter'd the sea beach along,
 Where the cool balmy breezes give health as they pass;
 The surge scarcely murmur'd the pebbles among,
 So still, that I heard the small grasshopper's song
 On the cliffs, 'mid the scanty grown grass.

A calm, like the waves hushed to silence, there fell
 On the wild stream of fancy's tumultuous thought;
 What stay'd their wild current, that spirit can tell,
 Whose magic divine gave its birth to the spell,
 Which so sweetly, yet mightily wrought.

I bethought on that secret Power which plann'd
 And reared all this wonderful structure of soul,
 Where Reflection's clear skies o'er the prospect expand,
 Where "Intellect's Towers" impregnable stand,
 The glory and strength of the whole.

How mighty this bulwark, exulting I cried,
 Lo, its turrets so lofty, all fearless I climb;
 Hence I gaze all around with superior pride,
 Hence abroad on the wings of Invention I ride,
 And scale all the ramparts of Time.

As I spake, a poor maniac wandered that way,
 On the steep he was led by a liveried groom;

In his eye a dim spark of mild phrenzy there lay,
 But passion was dead, and had yielded her sway
 To apathy's sovereign gloom.

All vacantly silent, one while he would gaze
 On the waters of ocean unmoved by a wind,
 Seemed pleased with the moon as she rose in a blaze,
 Then again appeared lost in the dreariest maze
 Of the wilderness waste in his mind.

This sight checked the pinions that pride had just spread,
 In a moment they sunk into earth and were still ;
 In the ruins of Reason before me I read,
 That He who had built this munition so dread,
 Might cast down its walls at His will.

And within me this oracle sprung to my ear,
 ('Twas the calm voice of truth by its wisdom confess'd)
 "Cease, mortal, to boast of security here,
 "Human pride must be banished this dignified sphere,
 "I will bring thee a worthier guest.

"Thou hast seen how in ruins yon citadel lies,
 "Guard thine own, while it yet has no breach to repair ;
 "Then lift, where the Towers of Intellect rise,
 "Religion's broad standard unfurled to the skies,
 "And plant it immoveably there.

"So from hence by thine eye shall that path be descried,
 "Which no vulture hath seen, where no lion hath trod,
 "Thou aloft on the wings of devotion shall ride,
 "And spurning the trappings and trammels of pride,
 "Shall triumph alone in thy God."

E. WABING.

MY FATHER'S AT THE HELM.

THE curling waves with awful roar
 A little bark assail'd,
 And pallid fear, distracting power,
 O'er all our board prevail'd—

Save one, the Captain's darling child,
 Who steadfast view'd the storm,
 And cheerful, with composure smiled
 At danger's threat'ning form.

“And sports thou thus,” a seaman cried,
 “While terrors overwhelm;”
 “Why should I fear,” the boy replied,
 “My Father's at the Helm.”

So when our worldly all is reft,
 Our earthly helpers gone,
 We still have one sure anchor left,
 God's help, and He alone.

He to our prayers will lend his ear,
 He gives our pangs relief,
 He'll turn to smiles each trembling tear,
 To joy each tort'ring grief.

Then turn to Him, 'mid sorrows wild,
 When wants and woes o'erwhelm,
 Remembering, like the fearless child,
 Our Father's at the Helm.

ANECDOTE OF ARCHBISHOP USHER.

JAMES USHER, Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of all Ireland, landed in some port of Wales, and travelled on foot to Worcester, where he desired permission of one of the Curates to preach in one of the Churches of that City; the Curate could not give him leave, without previously consulting the Bishop of that Diocese. Usher accompanied him, and was introduced into the presence of the great man, who, without asking him to sit down, gave him permission in a very contemptuous manner, after censuring him as an itinerant. Usher preached extempore that morning to a very large auditory, who were so much affected, that there was scarcely a dry eye in the place; in the evening, such fresh matter opened to him, that his discourse had the same effect on his hearers. The Bishop had but few hearers, which enraged him to such a degree, hearing also what effect Usher's preaching had, that he sent for him, and after much ungentle language, ordered him to his own parish, and then asked him his name. "I am," said the Archbishop, "James," "What!" cries the Bishop—"James Usher, my lord, and from Ireland." "What, have I the Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of all Ireland, under my roof? Pray, sir, sit down my lord, do my lord, I insist upon your lordship taking a bed with me, and beg you will take a glass of wine." "No—when I appeared as a meek humble follower of the blessed Jesus, you despised me, but now when you find me to be Archbishop of Armagh, you treat me with respect—No—I will neither break bread, nor drink water with you, but I will shake off the dust of my feet as a testimony against you." The Bishop was then alarmed, and joined the other Bishops in laying before

King James the impropriety of Archbishop Usher's travelling in the manner he did, and to request his being sent home. The King, who had a great opinion of Usher's abilities, refused compliance, and declared he would not. The Bishop, thinking to confound him, got permission for him to preach in the Chapel Royal, and for the Archbishop of Canterbury to fix upon a text immediately upon his entrance into it, on purpose to try whether he received his authority from inspiration. They accordingly gave him the following text, from 2d Timothy, chap. 4th, verse 13th—"The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments." This was an order from a tent maker to the Bishop of Ephesus, the capital of Asia. Usher handled the subject in a most extraordinary manner, and drew, in striking colours, the difference between the ancient and modern Bishops; the former so humble and exemplary; the latter so proud and imperious. The comments which he made, set him in a most amiable point of view to his hearers, whilst the Bishop of Worcester and his adherents were very justly confounded.

Though the change from day to night is by a motion so gradual scarcely to be perceived, yet when night is come, we behold it very different from the day; and thus as people become wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight, customs rise up from the spirit of the world and spread by little and little, till a departure from the simplicity that there is in Christ, becomes as distinguishable as light from darkness to such as are crucified to the world.

PAUL IN A STRAIT.

"For I am in a great strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better."---Phil. i. 2, 3.

To die, to enter into rest ;
 To die, to mingle with the blest ;
 To die, to go to Abram's breast,
 Is better far for me.

To die—at once the victory win ;
 To die, and never, never sin ;
 To die, to be with Christ shut in,
 Is gain immense and free.

To live, to labour, watch, and pray ;
 To live—in perils night and day ;
 To live, exposed to scorn alway,
 Is woeful misery.

To live—to preach, exhort, advise ;
 To live, to teach men to be wise—
 To run the race, and gain the prize,
 Is greater charity.

I'm in a strait—to live—to die—
 This leads to peaceful realms on high ;
 That dooms to roam beneath the sky
 In sad anxiety.

But wherefore reason thus in vain,
 'Bout death or life, or bliss, or pain ;
 To live is Christ—to die is gain—
 Throughout eternity.

STERNHOLD.

DEFINITION OF RELIGION,

BY AN AMERICAN MINISTER.

In the course of his ministerial labours, he observes :

“ I am, on this occasion, confirmed in a sentiment I have long been settled in : that is, that there never was, and never will be, but one true religion in the world ; to wit, “ the work of the Spirit of God in the souls of mankind ; and that no man has any real religion, but what he comes to the knowledge and experience of through the alone influence of this Holy Spirit of God. This it is that begins and carries on the work ; this it is that by its own divine influence operating in the minds of mankind, reveals *Christ in them the hope of glory* ;* or so operates from time to time, on reading the Scriptures or other good books, on hearing the gospel preached, on meditating on the works of Creation and Providence, on God’s judgments in the earth, or his dealings with themselves as individuals ; or whatever other occasion, circumstance, or thing, is ever made a mean of conviction or conversion ; the Holy Spirit so operates, I say, in all these cases, as to produce the happy effect ; and without the inward operation thereof, all these other opportunities and things would be utterly in vain, as to salvation, and never able to produce the least degree of true religion, or sanctification in the soul. So that, though there are many opinions, many creeds, professions, and denominations, and some truly religious persons in them all ; yet there is, and can be but one *true religion* ; all true religion is of one kind ; all springs from one source. And blessed and adored for ever be the Lord, in order that all men may, if they will, be

* Col. i. 27.

benefitted experimentally by this one true religion, *the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.** He that rightly profits thereby, and continues so to do, will live in the exercise of the *one*† true faith, will witness the *one* true Christian baptism, will know and obey *one* living Lord, will by the Holy Ghost, in word and deed, acknowledge and call him Lord, and so will be saved with an everlasting salvation. And on the other hand, seeing a measure of the Holy Spirit is given to every man ; seeing the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared unto all men ; seeing the light and the life of the holy Word, which in the beginning was with God, and was God, hath enlightened every man that cometh into the world ; and seeing, moreover, Christ Jesus has tasted death for every man, How shall we escape if we neglect and reject so great salvation ? How great must be the condemnation of every soul, thus highly favoured, which yet stands out and rejects the strivings of the Spirit, the teachings of grace, the shinings and convictions of this divine light ! Now this light, grace, and spirit of God, is all one thing under different appellations. It is called spirit because it is quick, lively, and operative, and quickens the soul to a sensibility of its state and condition ; it is called grace, because it is the free, unmerited gift of God ; and is called light, because it makes manifest ; *as whatsoever doth make manifest is light*,‡ say the Scriptures. And as this grace or light is attended to, it will bring the soul into a state of grace and favour with God. Well, therefore, might the Apostle, with holy reverence, break forth in these expressions, *Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*¶ And all who obey the light will be

* 1 Cor. xii. 7. † Eph. iv. 5. ‡ Eph. v. 13. ¶ 2 Cor. ix. 15.

brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light; for though the hearts of fallen men are grossly darkened, yet the light shineth in their dark hearts; and though the darkness comprehend it not, if it is taken heed to, will shine more and more unto the perfect day; even until the whole body be full of light. But those who rebel against the light, will grow darker and darker, until they know not the way thereof, nor understand the paths thereof; and become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts become wholly darkened; having *loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*"

After describing how he was first awakened to religious thoughtfulness, he expresses himself to the following import:—

"I now began to take notice of what I heard read and conversed of, respecting religion; and among other things, of the Spirit of God, and that good people in former times had it in them, and by it learned his will, and were enabled to perform it. I perceived it was often spoken of in both the Old and New Testament, and many other writings. I understood that true converts in these days also have it. But, like many others, I overlooked its lively checks and calls in myself; had no idea that I had ever known any thing of it; longed to be favoured with it; but supposed it was some extraordinary appearance, different far from any thing I ever yet had been acquainted with.

"Thus the Jews, even while they were expecting Christ's coming, knew him not when he came. They overlooked and despised his mean and ordinary appearance: thought he was Joseph's son, and born among them, and so rejected, abused, and finally put him to death. But they were mistaken in his pedigree: his

descent was from heaven, and *God*, not Joseph, was his father. Just so, are thousands now mistaken, as to the dignity and origin of God's Spirit in them; they think it is of *man*, a part of his nature and being; whereas it is of the very life, power, and substance of God. Its descent is as truly from heaven as was that of the Lord Jesus. He came in that *low, mean, and ordinary* appearance, as to outward show and accommodations, teaching us thereby *not to despise the day of small things*, nor overlook the littleness of the motions of divine life in our own souls.

“O! that children, and all people, would be careful in their very early years; and as they grow up and advance in life, to mind the *reproofs of instruction* in their own breasts; they are known to be *the way of life*. This *something*, though they know not what it is, that checks them in secret for evil, both before and after they yield to the temptation, warning them beforehand not to touch or taste, and afterwards condemning them if they do so, and inwardly inclining them to a life of religion and virtue;—this is the very thing, dear young people, whereby God worketh in you, to will and to do; and by which he will, if you cleave to it, and work with it, enable you to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling before him. Despise it not, do no violence to its motions; love it, cherish it, reverence it; hearken to its pleadings with you; give up, without delay, to its requirings, and obey its teachings. It is God's messenger for good to thy immortal soul: its voice is truly the voice of the living God; its call is a kind invitation to thee from the throne of grace. Hear it, and it will lead thee; obey it, and it will save thee: it will save thee from the power of sin and Satan; it

will finally lead thee to an inheritance incorruptible, in the mansions of rest, the *house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*"

J. SCOTT.

BENEVOLENCE.

Oh, never let us lightly fling
 A barb of woe to wound another;
 Oh, never let us haste to bring
 The cup of sorrow to a brother.
 Each has the power to wound—but he
 Who wounds that he may witness pain,
 Has learnt no law of Charity,
 Which ne'er inflicts a pang in vain.

'Tis godlike to awaken joy,
 Or sorrow's influence to subdue,
 But not to wound or to annoy
 Is part of Virtue's lesson too:
 Peace, winged in fairer worlds above,
 Shall lend her dawn and brighten this;
 When all man's labour shall be love,
 And all his thoughts—a brother's bliss.

ON RESIGNATION.

Our business in this world is not to perform certain particular good actions, but to tend constantly to the utmost perfection of our nature; to cultivate in our minds such a disposition as may fit us to obtain, and qualify us to enjoy, the eternal happiness of heaven:

and this may be done in every situation of life ; for however various the duties may be which we are called to perform, yet, while we act upon the same principle, they will all conduce to the same end. This principle should be a sincere love of God,—not according to the wild fancies of enthusiasm, but such a love as makes us ardently endeavour to please him, and conform ourselves to his will in every instance ; a love which extends to all our fellow creatures, and is the source of every heavenly disposition, of every good and benevolent action. Be it then our study to implant and cultivate this in our hearts, and then our enjoyments, or our sufferings in this world, will only serve to vary the actions in which it will exert itself ; since every state has its peculiar duties, by the performance of which, we may express our love and gratitude to our Maker, and secure his favour, and our own happiness.

Little do we know, in this frail and imperfect state, what tends most to our improvement ; and a situation, which appears to us most unfavourable to it, may be such as is really best for us. Such, indeed, we may be sure it is, when Infinite Wisdom and Goodness has decreed it for us.

The mind of man is naturally active, and the active duties are always the most pleasing. Life, deprived of these, presents a blank, more difficult to support than even powerful exertions, which are attended with success and self-approbation. Virtue is then no longer its own reward ; for silent suffering, when nothing else is in our power, affords no matter of exultation, but rather for the contrary, from the thought of the uselessness of such a life, which necessity itself seems hardly sufficient to justify.

Here, then, the importance of that true resignation

which religion inspires, appears in the strongest light, as well as the happiness attending on it. That life which once appeared a blank, is such no longer, for our time is still spent in the way most acceptable to our Creator. Had he required of us some great thing, some painful or difficult exertion, it would certainly have been our duty to have performed it; perhaps we fancy we could have performed it with satisfaction, but are we sure that there would have been no mixture of self-complacence, or even of vanity, in this satisfaction.

To feel and to enjoy the innocent pleasures, which our situation in this world affords, is not only natural, but laudable. The pleasing, as well as the painful circumstances in life, are intended for our real advantage; and the same disposition of mind, which resigns them readily when the will of God requires it, will also enjoy them while he bestows them, and enjoy them with a security which others can never feel, since the thought of their uncertainty (that constant alloy to every earthly pleasure) is always attended with a full conviction, that they will be enjoyed as long as is really best for us, and that an all-powerful assistance will enable us to support their loss. This, then, is the distinguishing character of true resignation.

It does not consist in giving up any particular thing which we loved and valued; it is not a virtue which is only to be called forth to action on extraordinary occasions;—but it is a constant and settled disposition of the mind, ever ready to conform to the will of God in every instance: to enjoy the pleasures, or submit to the afflictions which he sends, and to act or suffer, as the duties of every different situation may require.

It is the only sure foundation of patience, fortitude, self-denial, generosity, and all those virtues by which a

victory is gained over our own inclinations. Other motives may inspire them in particular instances, but they can never be practised constantly and universally, but by those whose will is sincerely resigned to the will of their Creator.

It is by true devotion, constantly felt and exercised, that true resignation can be fully attained. This furnishes a resource in every sorrow—a support in every trial; and, when this is truly felt, the heart may indeed be resigned in regard to the events of this world, since its best affections, its most ardent wishes, are fixed on another.

ON CANDOUR.

THE vanity of displaying superior talents is very prevalent, and it is often much more from this principle, than from real ill-nature, that the faults and imperfections of the absent are exposed. To gain admiration is the object of pursuit: any other way by which it might be attained, would answer the purpose just as well, but all others are more difficult, while this is within the reach of all; for the weakest have penetration enough to discover imperfections in those whose excellencies are far above their reach.

It is wonderful to observe, how many unfavourable and unjust opinions are formed, merely by not sufficiently considering the very different lights in which the same action will appear to different persons on different occasions. How many things are said in general conversation, from thoughtlessness and inattention, from a flow of spirits, a desire to say something which will not stand the test of a severe censure; and, which considered

separately, may appear in such a light as the speaker never thought of! Not only the ill-natured, but the superficial observer may often be misled by such appearances, and shocked at things which want only to be understood, in order to secure them a more favourable judgment.

It should always be carefully observed, as a great and discriminating character of true candour, by which it may be distinguished from all false pretences, that the motives by which it teaches us to be indulgent towards others are such as cannot have that effect when applied to ourselves, if we should ever indulge ourselves in those faults which we condemn in others.

We cannot see their hearts, and know their motives; and it is very possible that many an action, which is generally condemned, might, if all the circumstances were known, appear to be really deserving of commendation. Perhaps they could explain it, and clear themselves from the blame thrown on them, but are restrained from doing it by consideration for others, or some other good and charitable motive, which makes them willingly submit to the censure they might avoid, and dare to do right, not only without the support of that approbation which should be the consequence of it, but even when they know it will expose them to the contrary.

BOWDLER'S ESSAYS.

THE SABBATH BELL.

Pilgrim, thou hast meekly born,
 All the cold world's bitter scorn,
 Journeying through this vale of tears,
 Till the promised land appears,
 Where the pure in heart shall dwell—
 Thou dost bless the Sabbath Bell!

Idler, following Fashion's toys—
 Seeking, midst its empty joys,
 Pleasure that must end in pain ;
 Sunshine that will turn to rain ;
 What does whisp'ring conscience tell,
 When thou hear'st the Sabbath Bell ?

Poet, dreaming o'er thy lyre,
 Wasting health and youthful fire
 Wooing still the phantom fame,
 For, at best, a fleeting name ;
 Burst the chains of Fancy's spell,
 Listen—'tis the Sabbath Bell !

Monarch, on thy regal throne,
 Ruler, whom the nations own ;
 Captive, at thy prison grate,
 Sad in heart and desolate ;
 Bid earth's minor cares farewell—
 Hark—it is the Sabbath Bell !

Statesman, toiling in the mart,
 Where Ambition plays his part ;
 Peasant, bronzing 'neath the sun,
 Till thy six days' work is done ;
 Every thought of bus'ness quell,
 When ye hear the Sabbath Bell !

Maiden, with thy brow so fair,
 Blushing cheek and shining hair ;
 Child, with bright and laughing eye,
 Chasing the wing'd butterfly :
 Hasten, when o'er vale and dell,
 Sounds the gathering Sabbath Bell !

Trav'ler, thou whom gain or taste,
 Speedeth through earth's weary waste;
 Wand'rer, from thy native land,
 Rest thy steed, and slack thy hand;
 When the seventh day's sun-beams tell,
 There they wake the Sabbath Bell!

Soldier, who, on battle plain,
 Soon may'st mingle with the slain;
 Sailor, on the dark blue sea,
 As thy bark rides gallantly;
 Prayer and praise become ye well,
 Though ye hear no Sabbath Bell!

Mother, that with tearful eye,
 Stand'st to watch thy first-born die;
 Bending o'er his cradle bed,
 Till the last pure breath has fled;
 What to thee of hope can tell,
 Like the solemn Sabbath Bell?

"Mourner," thus it seems to say,
 "Weeping o'er the fragile clay;
 "Lift from earth thy streaming eyes,
 "Seek thy treasure in the skies,
 "Where the strains of angels swell
 "One eternal Sabbath Bell!"

MAN FORMED FOR ETERNITY.

MAN was created for the enjoyment of eternal blessedness. It is our high calling and destination; and not to pursue it with diligence, is to be guilty of the blackest

ingratitude to the author of our being, as well as the greatest cruelty to ourselves. To fail of such an object, to defeat the end of our existence, and, in consequence of neglecting the great salvation, to sink at last under the frown of the Almighty, is a calamity which words were not invented to express, nor finite minds formed to grasp. Eternity, it is surely not necessary to remind you, invests every state, whether of bliss or of suffering, with a mysterious and awful importance entirely its own, and is the only property in the creation which gives that weight and moment to whatever it attaches, compared to which all sublunary joys and sorrows, all interests which know a period, fade into the most contemptible insignificance. In appreciating every other object, it is easy to exceed the proper estimate. But what, if it be lawful to indulge such a thought, what would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? where shall we find the tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle? or, could we realize the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration and concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light, and the moon her brightness; to cover the ocean with mourning, and the heavens with sackcloth? or, were the whole fabric of nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?

“What manner of persons,” then, “ought we to be,” who are walking on the brink of such an eternity, and possess no assurance, but that the next moment will convey us to the regions of happiness, or of despair!

R. HALL.

THE SUNDEW.

By the lone fountain's secret bed,
Where human footsteps rarely tread—
'Mid the wild moor and silent glen,
The Sundew blooms unseen of men.

Spreads there her leaf of rosy hue,
A chalice for the morning dew ;
And, ere the summer sun can rise,
Drinks the pure water of the skies.

Oh ! would that to my lot were given,
Thus to receive the dews of heaven ;
If, waiting like the lowly flower,
My spirit hailed the dawning hour.

Then would a blessing from on high,
Pure as the rain of Summer's sky,
Unsullied as the morning dew,
Descend, and all my strength imbue.

Then to that fountain's sacred spring,
My chalice let me humbly bring ;
And prostrate seek, in earnest prayer,
The streams of heavenly grace to share.

Then would my soul no more complain,—
The former and the latter rain,
The morning and the evening dew,
Will still my failing strength renew.

EXALTED SOCIETY, AND THE RENEWAL OF VIRTUOUS CONNEXIONS, TWO SOURCES OF FUTURE FELICITY.

BESIDES the felicity which springs from perfect love, there are two circumstances which particularly enhance the blessedness of that multitude who stand before the Throne ; these are, access to the most exalted society, and renewal of the most tender connexions. The former is pointed out in the Scripture, by "joining the innumerable company of Angels, and the general assembly and Church of the first-born, by sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven : " a promise which opens the sublimest prospects to the human mind. It allows good men to entertain the hope, that, separated from all the dregs of the human mass, from that mixed and polluted crowd in the midst of which they now dwell, they shall be permitted to mingle with the prophets, patriarchs, and apostles, with all those great and illustrious spirits who have shone in former ages as the servants of God, or the benefactors of men : whose deeds we are accustomed to celebrate ; whose steps we now follow at a distance ; and whose names we pronounce with veneration. United to this high assembly, the blessed, at the same time, renew those ancient connexions with virtuous friends, which had been dissolved by death. The prospect of this awakens in the heart the most pleasing and tender sentiment that, perhaps, can fill it in this mortal state. For of all the sorrows which we are here doomed to endure, none is so bitter as that occasioned by the fatal stroke which separates us in appearance for ever, from those to whom either nature or friendship had intimately joined our hearts. Memory, from time to time, renews

the anguish, opens the wound which seemed once to have been closed, and, by recalling joys that are past and gone, touches every spring of painful sensibility. In these agonizing moments, how relieving the thought, that the separation is only temporary, not eternal ; that there is a time to come of re-union with those with whom our happiest days were spent ; whose joys and sorrows once were ours ; whose piety and virtue cheered and encouraged us ; and from whom, after we shall have landed on the peaceful shore where they dwell, no revolutions of nature shall ever be able to part us more ! Such is the society of the blessed above. Of such are the multitude composed who “ stand before the Throne.”

BLAIR.

COMPASSION.

COMPASSION is a debt which one human being owes to another : a debt which no distinction of sect or party, no imperfection of character, no degree of ingratitude, unkindness, or cruelty, will cancel. When we see that a fellow-creature hath need of our assistance, to enquire to what country he belongs, what religious tenets he professes, or what party name he wears, betrays the most contemptible bigotry and weakness ; but to deny him our charitable aid, or to hear with the least degree of indifference or neglect, because he happens to profess a religion, or belong to a society different from our own, is unpardonable inhumanity. He who can withhold the tear of compassion, or delay the offices of kindness and charity, till he hath satisfied himself concerning such trifles as these, hath a narrow, contracted spirit—a cold, unfeeling heart—which can never do honour to any

religion or any sect. The object who solicits my notice, may be a Mahomedan, a Pagan, or a Jew, or a wild Barbarian; but what have I to do with his religion, or his country! It is enough for me, that I am assured he deserves my pity, and needs my assistance. He may have been a person of a vile and abandoned character; he may even have greatly injured or offended me; but is he on that account the less my brother, or the less in need of my kindness? If I see him in distress, it is not now a time to call in mind his faults, or to upbraid him with his conduct: the more unworthy he is of my friendship—the greater affronts he hath offered me—the better opportunity I have of manifesting my disinterested benevolence, and my forgiving temper.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEISM.

(*From A. Reed's Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity.*)

BUT where all this time are the triumphs of Deism? Why has this shrewd objector (Gibbon) sought to neutralize the success of the Gospel by a train of secondary causes, and by opposing to the triumphs of the Cross those of the Crescent, when it was so much more appropriate to have adduced the conquests of Infidelity and Deism? Deism! which we are told is as old as the Creation, whose creed is written in the firmament, whose law is printed on every man's conscience, and whose lights are sufficient without revelation to teach us whatever we ought to know or to perform: Deism! encumbered by no priestcraft, shrouded by no mysteries, subject to none of the imperfections attending on oral and traditional communications: Deism! so flattering to human reason, so accommodated to human desire, so

boastful of her beneficence and philanthropy; and whose voice, like that of the spheres, is distinctly heard through all speech and all language: surely this is the system, if any, which shall find at once, and without difficulty, universal acceptance and dominion. But where are the triumphs of Deism? Where her Apostles? Where her altars? Where her worshippers? What nation has she illuminated? What superstition has she subdued? Her creed is written legibly in the heavens—who has been edified by it? She possesses the antidote of human misery. To whom has it been effectually dispensed? If we listen to her advocates, she is sufficient of herself to bless mankind; if we consult her history, none has she blessed,—no where has she triumphed!

Yes—I stand corrected—Deism has triumphed. Once, and in our own day, she has triumphed. Availing herself of the wretchedness of a people galled by the fetters of superstition and slavery, she spoke of illumination, liberty, renovation, and social good. Her voice passed over their chafed spirits like the breath of heaven. In evil hour they threw themselves recklessly into her hands, and infidelity was enthroned in the very heart of the civilized world. All existing institutions were destroyed—all existing ties were broken. The ordinary principles of action were despised; man was made a law to himself; and the obligations which arise from social compact and Divine authority were cancelled. Earth was separated from Heaven. A gross and all-consuming selfishness sprang up. Virtue was stunned and stultified. Vice became monstrous and gigantic. All things became ominous, dark, and dreadful. Men's hearts failed them for fear. They would have retraced their steps; but there was no return!

The crisis came—the storm burst—Hell from beneath

was moved in that hour. Man became a fiend, and woman too! Thrones, altars, temples, palaces—all—were born down in the sweeping tides of blood and desolation. Nothing remained to man of hope on earth; and, beyond it, nothing but the wide, deep, dark, yawning gulf of horrible, horrible annihilation!

Yes, Infidelity, thou hast triumphed!

ON THE MYSTERIES OF REVELATION.

THE acknowledgment of the truth of the Scriptures, when made in sincerity, and the admission that we are bound to receive and obey whatever they contain, will necessarily produce a desire to know what are the leading and most important subjects which they bring into view. That they will contain or imply many things not easily to be understood, far less fully comprehended in the present state, might be expected, if there exists any analogy between the natural and moral administration of Jehovah. If there are mysteries in a blade of grass, a drop of water, or a grain of sand,—not to speak of the arcana of the universe, the number or magnitude of the hosts of heaven,—we must expect inscrutable things in that mighty scheme into which “Angels desire to look,” and which embraces the salvation and everlasting destiny of countless millions of fallen creatures. Blessed be God! the most important truths are revealed with the brightest lustre; the grand discoveries of the mysteries of redemption are “without controversy” among all genuine believers; so that, while we say with profound reverence, “The secret things belong to the Lord our God:” we can add, with high satisfaction and gratitude, “The things that are revealed belong to us, and our children, for ever.”

W. ORME.

REFLECTION.

WHEN all the fiercer passions cease
 (The glory and disgrace of youth,)
 When the deluded soul in peace
 Can listen to the voice of truth ;
 When we are taught in whom to trust,
 And how to spare, to spend, to give,
 (Our prudence kind, our pity just,)
 'Tis thus we rightly learn to live.

Its weakness when the body feels,
 Nor danger in contempt defies ;
 To reason when desire appeals,
 When on experience hope relies ;
 When every passing hour we prize,
 Nor rashly on our follies spend ;
 But use it as it quickly flies,
 With sober aim to serious end :
 When prudence bounds our utmost views,
 And bids us wrath and wrong forgive ;
 When we can calmly gain or lose,
 'Tis then we rightly learn to live.

Yet thus when we our way discern,
 And can upon our care depend ;
 To travel safely when we learn,
 Behold ! we're near our journey's end.
 We've trod the maze of error round,
 Long wandering in the winding glade ;
 And now the torch of truth is found,
 It only showed us where we stray'd :
 Light, for ourselves, what is it worth
 When we no more our way can choose ?

For others when we hold it forth,
 They, in their pride, the boon refuse.

By long experience taught, we now
 Can rightly judge of friends and foes ;
 Can all the worth of these allow,
 And all their faults discern in those ;
 Relentless hatred, envying love,
 We can for sacred truth forego ;
 We can the warmest friend reprove,
 And bear to praise the fiercest foe ;
 To what effect ? Our friends are gone,
 Beyond reproof, regard, or care ;
 And of our foes, remains there one,
 The mild relenting thoughts to share ?

Now 'tis our boast that we can quell
 The wildest passions in their rage ;
 Can their destructive force repel,
 And their impetuous wrath assuage :
 Ah ! Virtue, dost thou boast, when now
 This bold rebellious race are fled ;
 When all these tyrants rest, and thou
 Art warring with the mighty dead ?
 Revenge, ambition, scorn, and pride,
 And strong desire, and fierce disdain,
 The giant brood by thee defied,
 Lo ! time's resistless strokes have slain.

Yet time, who could that race subdue
 (O'erpowering strength, appeasing rage,)
 Leaves yet a persevering crew
 To try the failing powers of age ;
 Vex'd by the constant call of these,
 Virtue awhile for conquest tries,

But weary grown and freed of ease,
 She makes with them a compromise ;
 Avarice himself she gives to rest,
 But rules him with her strict commands ;
 Bids Pity touch his torpid breast,
 And Justice hold his eager hands.

Yet, is there nothing man can do,
 When chilling age comes creeping on ?
 Can we not yet some good pursue ?
 Are talents buried ? genius gone ?
 If passions slumber in the breast,
 If follies from the heart be fled ;
 Of laurels let us go in quest,
 And place them on the Poet's head.

Yes, we'll redeem the wasted time,
 And to neglected studies flee ;
 We'll build again the lofty rhyme,
 Or live, Philosophy, with thee ;
 For reasoning clear, for flight sublime,
 Eternal fame reward shall be ;
 And to what glorious heights we'll climb,
 The admiring crowd shall envying see

Begin the song ! begin the theme !—
 Alas ! and is invention dead ?
 Dream we no more the golden dream ?
 Is memory with her treasures fled ?
 Yes ! 'tis too late,—now reason guides
 The mind, sole judge in all debate ;
 And thus th' important point decides :
 For laurels 'tis, alas, too late,
 What is possess'd we may retain,
 But for our conquests strive in vain.

Beware then, age, that what was won
 In life's past labours, studies, views,
 Be lost not now the labour's done,
 When all thy part is,—not to lose :
 When thou can'st toil or gain no more,
 Destroy not what was gain'd before.

For all that's gain'd of all that's good,
 When time shall his weak frame destroy,
 (Their use then rightly understood,)
 Shall man in happier state enjoy.
 Oh ! argument for truth divine,
 For study's cares, for virtue's strife ;
 To know the enjoyment will be thine
 In that reserv'd, that endless life!

CRADÉE.

ON THE BIBLE.

AMONG various pretensions, which is the Divine Revelation? We have called the Bible "The Book," by way of distinction and pre-eminence; but other religions, besides Christianity, have their Book—their prejudices in its favour, their arguments in its support, their proselytes, adherents, and martyrs. How shall this question be decided? By a fair comparison, and faithful testimony. If in these there shall be found nothing out of the reach of reason, which is not evidently borrowed from the inspired writers; if in these there shall be found, commingled with so much of truth as they contain, concessions to human prejudices and passions—the pretended revelation becoming a pander to the lusts and corruptions of the depraved heart of

man ; if power, ambition, vice, cruelty, shall be sanctioned, flattered, indulged, excited—and what false religion from Indus to the Pole—what pretended revelation, in any age, has not done all this ? If the Christian volume stands alone in unappeasable hostility against vice, in principle and in detail, whether prosperous in high places, or shrinking into the sordid retreats of poverty ; whether openly avowed or secretly practised ; therefore, encountering predominant prejudices, and fearlessly scattering rebukes, always consistent and always unsparing ; if to this superhuman firmness it add the sanction of new motives, the development of undiscovered principles, the establishment of perfect and inflexible laws ; if it display the dawn of an eternal morning breaking even upon the sepulchre—not the dazzling corruscations of fancy playing over the darkness of nature, but the shining light which distinctly defines whatever falls within the present horizon of mortal vision, and clearly demonstrates infinity beyond, in the depths of unexplored futurity : the comparison is at an end, and nothing remains but contrast. Zoroaster, Confucius, Menu, Mohammed, every name yields to Jesus ; every pretence to his claims—every effort of human wisdom and philosophy—vanishes away, and the Book remains unrivalled and triumphant.

The confluent tides of time and providence—sometimes flowing a deep, silent, fathomless river—sometimes pouring their congregated torrents in the thunder of mighty cataracts—whether sleeping in the meadow, or bursting over the rock—set in with undeviating current, and undiminished fulness, upon the infinite ocean of Redemption.

W. B. COLLYER.

THE BEAUTY AND WISDOM OF THE CREATION.

MALIGNANT must be the mind of that person, with a distorted eye he must have contemplated creation, who can suspect, that it is not the production of infinite benignity and goodness. How many clear marks of benevolent attention appear every where around us! What a profusion of beauty and ornament is poured forth on the face of nature! What a magnificent spectacle presented to the view of man! What supply contrived for his wants! What a variety of objects set before him, to gratify his senses, to employ his understanding, to entertain his imagination, to cheer and gladden his heart! Indeed, the very existence of the universe is a standing memorial of the goodness of the Creator. For nothing except goodness could originally prompt creation. The Supreme Being, self-existent and all-sufficient, had no wants which he could seek to supply. No new accession of felicity or glory was to result to him from creatures whom he made. It was goodness communicating and pouring itself forth, goodness delighting to impart happiness in all its forms, which in the beginning created the heaven and the earth. Hence those innumerable orders of living creatures with which the earth is peopled; from the lowest class of sensitive being to the highest rank of reason and intelligence. Wherever there is life, there is some degree of happiness; there are enjoyments suited to the different powers of feeling; and earth, and air, and water, are with magnificent liberality made to teem with life.

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In the most inconsiderable, as well as in the most illustrious works of the Creator, consummated by his

design appear. There is not a creature that moves, nor a vegetable that grows, but, when minutely examined, furnishes materials of the highest admiration. The same wisdom that placed the sun in the centre of the system, and arranged the several planets around him in their order, has no less shown itself in the provision made for the food and dwelling of every bird that roams the air, and every beast that wanders in the desert; equally great, in the smallest, and in the most magnificent objects; in the star, and in the insect; in the elephant, and in the fly; in the beam that shines from heaven, and in the grass that clothes the ground. Nothing is overlooked. Nothing is carelessly performed. Every thing that exists is adapted, with perfect symmetry, to the end for which it was designed. All this infinite variety of particulars must have been present to the mind of the Creator; all beheld with one glance of his eye; all fixed and arranged, from the beginning, in his great design, when he formed the heavens and the earth.

* * * * *

To higher and more serious thoughts these works of nature give occasion, when considered in conjunction with the Creator who made them.—Let me call on you, my friends, to catch some interval of reflection, some serious moment, for looking with thoughtful eye on the world around you. Lift your view to that immense arch of heaven which encompasses you above. Behold the sun in all his splendour rolling over your head by day; and the moon by night, in mild and serene majesty, surrounded with that host of stars which present to your imagination an innumerable multitude of worlds. Listen to the awful voice of thunder. Listen to the roar of the tempest and the ocean. Survey the wonders that fill the earth which you inhabit. Contemplate a steady

and powerful hand bringing round spring and summer, autumn and winter, in regular course ; decorating this earth with innumerable beauties, diversifying it with innumerable inhabitants, pouring forth comforts on all that live ; and, at the same time, overawing the nations with the violence of the elements, when it pleases the Creator to let them forth.—After you have viewed yourselves surrounded with such a scene of wonders ; after you have beheld, on every hand, such an astonishing display of majesty united with wisdom and goodness ; are you not seized with solemn and serious awe ? Is there not something which whispers you within, that to this great Creator reverence and homage are due by all the rational beings whom he has made ? Admitted to be spectators of his works, placed in the midst of so many great and interesting objects, can you believe that you were brought hither for no purpose but to immerse yourselves in gross and brutal, or, at best, in trifling pleasures ; lost to all sense of the wonders you behold ; lost to all reverence of that God who gave you being, and who has erected this amazing fabric of nature, on which you look only with stupid and unmeaning eyes ? —No : Let the scenes which you behold prompt correspondent feelings. Let them awaken you from the degrading intoxication of licentiousness into nobler emotions. Every object which you view in nature, whether great or small, serves to instruct you. The star and the insect, the fiery meteor and the flower of spring, the verdant field and the lofty mountain, all exhibit a Supreme Power, before which you ought to tremble and adore ; all preach the doctrine, all inspire the spirit of devotion and reverence. “Regarding,” then, “the work of the Lord,” let rising emotions of awe and gratitude call forth from your souls such sentiments as

these :—" Lord, wherever I am, and whatever I enjoy, may I never forget thee as the Author of nature ! May I never forget that I am thy creature and thy subject ! In this magnificent temple of the universe, where thou hast placed me, may I ever be thy faithful worshipper ; and may the reverence and the fear of God be the first sentiments of my heart !"

* * * * *

It is impossible to think of God at all, without conceiving him as the Benefactor of mankind. Mysterious as this world is in many of its appearances, it nevertheless carries, on the whole, a strongly marked character of goodness and benignity in its Author. We behold a vast system obviously contrived to provide, not food and nourishment only, but comfort also and enjoyment to an infinite number of inhabitants. The more that philosophy has enlarged our views of nature, the more it has been discovered that, throughout the wide extent of creation, there is no useless profusion of magnificence, but that every thing has been rendered subservient to the welfare of the rational or sensible world ; nay, that many objects, which were once considered as not only superfluous, but noxious, hold an useful place in the general system. Such provision has been made for our entertainment on this earth, such care has been taken to store the world with a variety of pleasures, to cheer our senses, and enliven our imagination, that he whose eye opens on all the beauty of nature, must be of insensible heart, indeed, if he feels no gratitude to that Being who has brought him forth to enjoy this wonderful scene.

* * * * *

In the midst of your solitary musings, lift your eyes, and behold all nature full of God. Look up to the fir-

mament and admire his glory. Look round on the earth, and observe his presence every where displayed. If the gay landscape, or the fruitful field, present themselves to your eye, behold him smiling upon his works. If the mountain raise its lofty head, or the expanse of waters roll its tide before you, contemplate, in those great and solemn objects, his power and majesty. Nature, in all its diversities, is a varied manifestation of the Deity. If you were to "take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea," even there you will find him. For "in him you live and move." He fills and animates all space. In the barren wilderness, as in the peopled region, you can trace his footsteps; and in the deepest solitude, you may hear a voice which testifies of him.

Him, indeed, you are never to confound with the workmanship of his hands. Nature, in its most awful or most pleasing scenes, exhibits no more than different forms of inanimate matter. But on these dead forms is impressed the glory of a living spirit. The beauty, or the greatness, which appears in them, flows from the Fountain of all greatness and beauty; in him it centres; of his perfection it reflects an image; and towards him should lead your view.—In conversing with a fellow-creature on earth, it is not with his body we converse, though it is his body only which we see. From his words and actions we conceive his mind; with his mind, though invisible, we hold correspondence, and direct towards this spiritual essence our affection and regard. In like manner, though here we behold no more of God than what his works display, yet, in those displays, we are capable of perceiving the universal Spirit, and of holding correspondence with this unseen Being, in veneration, gratitude, and love.

BLAIR.

SABBATH MORNING.

Now along the morning gale
Tolls the church-bell soft and slowly,
And o'er mountain, wood, and vale,
Sleeps the Sabbath silence holy.

Not a human voice is heard,
Voice of labour or of pleasure,
Mingling with the tuneful bird,
As it trills its early measure.

Now, from every mountain glen,
Scenes of unpolluted nature,
Come the lonely shepherd men,
Peace in every heart and feature.

Now, along the village way,
Clad in meet and homely dresses,
Matrons staid, and maidens gay,
Join the crowd that church-ward presses.

Now the youthful and the old,
Now the cheerful and the weeping,
Tread along the flowery mould,
Where their kindred dust is sleeping.

Now the pious spirit glows,
Now the holy psalm is singing,
Bringing thoughts of long repose,
Thoughts of endless glory bringing.

TO AN INFANT.

THOU wak'st from happy sleep to play,
 With bounding heart my boy!
 Before thee lies a long bright day
 Of summer and of joy.

Thou hast no heavy thought or dream
 To cloud thy fearless eye;—
 Long be it thus; life's early stream
 Should still reflect the sky!

Yet ere the cares of earth lie dim
 On thy young spirit's wings,
 Now in thy morn forget not Him
 From whom each pure thought springs!

So in thy onward vale of tears,
 Where'er thy path may be,
 When strength hath bow'd to evil years,
 He will remember thee.

FIXED PRINCIPLES INDISPENSABLE.

SETTING the consideration of religion and virtue aside, and attending, merely to interest and reputation, it will be found that he who enters on active life without having ascertained some regular plan, will be unprosperous in the whole of his subsequent progress. But when conduct is viewed in a moral and religious light, the effect of having fixed no principles of action, of having formed no laudable standard of character, becomes more obviously fatal. For hence it is, that the

young and thoughtless imbibe so readily the poison of "evil communications," and fall a prey to every seducer. They have no internal guide whom they are accustomed to follow and obey; nothing within themselves that can give firmness to their conduct. They are of course the victims of momentary inclination or caprice; religious and good by starts, when, during the absence of temptation and tempters, the virtuous principle stirs within them; but never long the same; changing and fluctuating according to the passion that chances to rise, or the instigation of those with whom they have connected themselves. They are sailing on a dangerous sea, which abounds with rocks; without compass, by which to direct their course; or helm, by which to guide the vessel. Whereas, if they acted on a system, if their behaviour made it appear that they were determined to conduct themselves by certain rules and principles, not only would they escape innumerable dangers, but they would command respect from the licentious themselves. Evil doers would cease to lay their snares for one whom they saw moving above them, in a higher sphere, and with a more steady course.

* * * *

Nothing can be more wavering and disjointed, than the behaviour of those who are wholly men of the world, and have never been inured to commune with themselves. Dissipation is a more frequent cause of their ruin than determined impiety. It is not so much because they have adopted bad principles, as because they have never attended to principles of any kind, that their lives are so full of incoherence and disorder.—You hover on the borders of sin and duty. One day you read the Scriptures, you hear religious discourses, and form good resolutions. Next day you plunge into the

world, and forget the serious impression, as if it had never been made. The impression is again renewed, and again effaced; and in this circle your life revolves. Is such conduct worthy of creatures endowed with intelligent powers? Shall the close of life overtake you, before you have determined how to live? Shall the day never come, that is to find you steady in your views, decided in your plans, and engaged in a course of action which your mind approves? If you wish that day ever to arrive, retirement and meditation must first bring you home to yourselves, from the dissipation in which you are now scattered; must teach you to fix such aims, and to lay down such rules of conduct, as are suitable to rational and immortal beings. Then will your character become uniform and respectable. Then you may hope that your life will proceed in such a train as shall prepare you, when it is finished, for joining the society of more exalted spirits.

* * * * *

It is a careless train of living, that is the general ruin of mankind. It is not so much from having adopted evil principles that men become wicked, as from having adopted no principles at all. They follow their inclinations, without examining whether there be any principles which they ought to form for regulating their conduct. The chief corrective of this mischief is that which has been suggested; by bringing conscience into a frequent exercise of its power, and thereby awakening its authority over our life.

BLAIR.

THE MAN OF INTEGRITY.

It will not take much time to delineate the character of the man of integrity, as by its nature it is a plain one, and easily understood. He is one who makes it his constant rule to follow the road of duty, according as the word of God, and the voice of his conscience, point out to him.

He is not guided merely by affections, which may sometimes give the colour of virtue to a loose and unstable character. The upright man is guided by a fixed principle of mind, which determines him to esteem nothing but what is honourable, and to abhor whatever is base and unworthy in moral conduct. Hence you find him ever the same; at all times, the trusty friend, the affectionate relation, the conscientious man of business, the pious worshipper, the public-spirited citizen. He assumes no borrowed appearance. He seeks no mask to cover him; for he acts no studied part; but he is in truth what he appears to be, full of truth, candour, and humanity. In all his pursuits he knows no part but the fair and direct one; and would much rather fail of success, than attain it by reproachful means. He never shews you a smiling countenance while he meditates evil against you in his heart. He never praises you among your friends, and then joins in traducing you among your enemies. You will never find one part of his character at variance with another. In his manners he is simple and unaffected; in all his proceedings open and consistent.

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The man of the world aims at higher things, and more rapid success, than the man of moderation and virtue. But at the same time, he incurs greater risks and dan-

gers. No calculation of probabilities can insure safety to him who is acting a deceitful part. Amidst the unforeseen vicissitudes of the world, he has to dread not only disappointment to his plans, but the miseries also which detected fallacies may bring on his head. He walks on the ledge of precipices where a single false step may be fatal. He follows a wandering light, which, if it fail of guiding him by a short path to the palace of ambition, leads him into the pit, or the lake. Whereas, he who follows the guidance of integrity, walks in the high road on which the light of the sun shines. He sees before him the habitation of peace to which his steps are directed ; and if he be longer in arriving at it, he is sure of neither wandering far astray, nor of meeting on his road with any forms of unusual terror. Let it be always remembered, that the principle of integrity which directs a good man is far from excluding prudence in the conduct of life. It implies no improvident or thoughtless simplicity. On the contrary, it is closely connected with true wisdom. A man of enlarged capacity, and extensive views, is always upright. Craft is merely the supplement of inferior abilities. It characterises a narrow comprehension, and a little mind.

BLAIR.

TEMPERANCE.

RARELY drink but when thou art thirsty ; nor then, between meals, if it can be avoided. The smaller the drink, the clearer the head, and the cooler the blood : which are great benefits in temper and business.

W. PENN.

PHILOSOPHY UNABLE TO TEACH US TRUTH.

GOD never meant that man should scale the heavens
 By strides of human wisdom. In his works,
 Though wondrous, he commands us in his word
 To seek him rather, where his mercy shines.
 The mind, indeed, enlighten'd from above,
 Views him in all ; ascribes to the grand cause
 The grand effect ; acknowledges with joy
 His manner, and with rapture tastes his style.
 But never yet did philosophic tube,
 That brings the planets home into the eye
 Of Observation, and discovers, else
 Not visible, his family of worlds,
 Discover him that rules them ; such a veil
 Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
 And dark in things divine. Full often, too,
 Our wayward intellect, the more we learn
 Of nature, overlooks her Author more ;
 From instrumental causes proud to draw
 Conclusions retrograde, and mad mistake.
 But if his word once teach us, shoot a ray
 Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal
 Truths undiscern'd but by that holy light ;
 Then all is plain. Philosophy, baptized
 In the pure fountain of eternal love,
 Has eyes indeed ; and viewing all she sees
 As meant to indicate a God to man,
 Gives *him* his praise, and forfeits not her own.
 Learning has borne such fruit in other days
 On all her branches ; piety has found
 Friends in the friends of science, and true prayer
 Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dews.
 Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage !

Sagacious reader of the works of God,
 And in his word sagacious. Such too thine,
 Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,
 And fed on manna ! And such thine, in whom
 Our British Themis gloried with just cause,
 Immortal Hale ! for deep discernment praised,
 And sound integrity, not more than famed
 For sanctity of manners undefiled.

All flesh is grass, and all its glory fades
 Like the fair flower dishevell'd in the wind ;
 Riches have wings, and grandeur is a dream :
 The man we celebrate must find a tomb,
 And we that worship him ignoble graves.
 Nothing is proof against the general curse
 Of vanity, that seizes all below.
 The only amaranthine flower on earth
 Is virtue ; the only lasting treasure, truth.
 But what is truth ? 'twas Pilate's question put
 To Truth itself, that deign'd him no reply.
 And wherefore ? will not God impart his light
 To them that ask it ?—Freely—'tis his joy,
 His glory, and his nature, to impart :
 But to the proud, uncandid, insincere,
 Or negligent inquirer, not a spark.
 What's that which brings contempt upon a book
 And him who writes it, though the style be neat,
 The method clear, and argument exact ?
 That makes a minister in holy things
 The joy of many, and the dread of more,
 His name a theme for praise and for reproach ?—
 That, while it gives us worth in God's account,
 Depreciates and undoes us in our own ?
 What pearl is it that rich men cannot buy,
 That learning is too proud to gather up ;

But which the poor, and the despised of all,
 Seek and obtain, and often find unsought ?
 Tell me—and I will tell thee what is truth.

COWPER.

PRECEPTS FOR YOUTH.

As, in the succession of the seasons, each, by the invincible laws of Nature, affects the productions of what is next in course ; so, in human life, every period of our age, according as it is well or ill spent, influences the happiness of that which is to follow. Virtuous youth gradually brings forward accomplished and flourishing manhood ; and such manhood passes of itself, without uneasiness, into respectable and tranquil old age. But when nature is turned out of its regular course, disorder takes place in the moral, just as in the vegetable, world. If the spring put forth no blossoms, in summer there will be no beauty, and in autumn no fruit. So, if youth be trifled away without improvement, manhood will be contemptible, and old age miserable. If the beginnings of life have been “vanity,” its latter end can be no other than “vexation of spirit.”

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The self-conceit of the young is the great source of those dangers to which they are exposed, and it is peculiarly unfortunate, that the age which stands most in need of the counsel of the wise should be the most prone to condemn it. Confident in the opinions which they adopt, and in the measures which they pursue, they seem as if they understood Solomon to say, not, “Who knoweth,” but, who is ignorant of “what is good for man all the days of his life ?” The bliss to be aimed at

is, in their opinion, fully apparent. It is not the danger of mistake, but the failure of success, which they dread. Activity to seize, not sagacity to discern, is the only requisite which they value.—How long shall it be, ere the fate of your predecessors in the same course teach you wisdom? How long shall the experience of all ages continue to lift its voice to you in vain? Beholding the ocean on which you are embarked, covered with wrecks, are not those fatal signals sufficient to admonish you of the hidden rock? If, in Paradise itself, there was a tree which bore fruit fair to the eye, but mortal in its effects, how much more, in this fallen state, may such deceiving appearances be expected to abound! The whole state of Nature is now become a scene of delusion to the sensual mind. Hardly any thing is what it appears to be. And what flatters most, is always farthest from reality. There are voices which sing around you; but whose strains allure to ruin. There is a banquet spread, where poison is in every dish. There is a couch invites you to repose; but to slumber upon it is death. In such a situation, “be not high-minded, but fear.” Let sobriety temper your unwary ardour. Let modesty check your rash presumption. Let wisdom be the offspring of reflection now, rather than the fruit of bitter experience hereafter.

* * * * *

Of all the follies incident to youth, there are none which either deform its present appearance, or blast the prospect of its future prosperity, more than self-conceit, presumption, and obstinacy. By checking its natural progress in improvement, they fix it in long immaturity; and frequently produce mischiefs, which can never be repaired. Yet these are vices too commonly found among the young. Big with enterprise, and elated by hope,

they resolve to trust for success to none but themselves. Full of their own abilities, they deride the admonitions which are given them by their friends, as the timorous suggestions of age. Too wise to learn, too impatient to deliberate, too forward to be restrained, they plunge, with precipitant indiscretion, into the midst of all the dangers with which life abounds, "Seest thou a young man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool, than of him."

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In order to render yourselves amiable in society, correct every appearance of harshness in behaviour. Let that courtesy distinguish your demeanour, which springs not so much from studied politeness, as from a mild and gentle heart. Follow the customs of the world in matters indifferent, but stop when they become sinful. Let your manners be simple and natural; and of course they will be engaging. Affectation is certain deformity. By forming themselves on fantastic models, and vying with one another in every reigning folly, the young begin with being ridiculous, and end in being vicious and immoral.

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It is necessary to recommend to you sincerity and truth. This is the basis of every virtue. That darkness of character, where we can see no heart, those foldings of art, through which no native affection is allowed to penetrate, present an object, unamiable in every season of life, but particularly odious in youth. If, at an age when the heart is warm, when the emotions are strong, and when nature is expected to show itself free and open, you can already smile and deceive, what are we to look for when you shall be longer hackneyed in the ways of men; when interest shall have completed

the obduration of your heart, and experience shall have improved you in all the arts of guile? Dissimulation in youth, is the fore-runner of perfidy in old age. Its first appearance is the fatal omen of growing depravity, and future shame. It degrades parts and learning, obscures the lustre of every accomplishment, and sinks you into contempt with God and man.

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Nothing is of more importance for the young, than to be careful in the choice of their friends and companions. This choice is too frequently made without much thought, or is determined by some casual connexion; and yet, very often, the whole fate of their future life depends upon it. The circumstances which chiefly attract the liking and the friendship of youth are vivacity, good humour, engaging manners, and a cheerful or easy temper; qualities, I confess, amiable in themselves, and useful and valuable in their place. But I entreat you to remember, that these are not all the qualities requisite to form an intimate companion or friend: something more is still to be looked for, a sound understanding, a steady mind, a firm attachment to principle, to virtue, and honour. As only solid bodies polish well, it is only on the substantial ground of these manly endowments, that the other amiable qualities can receive their proper lustre.

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Too many of the pretended friendships of youth are mere combinations in pleasure. They are often founded on capricious likings; suddenly contracted, and as suddenly dissolved. Sometimes they are the effect of interested complaisance and flattery on the one side, and of credulous fondness on the other. Beware of such rash and dangerous connexions, which may afterwards

load you with dishonour. Remember, that by the character of those whom you choose for your friends, your own is likely to be formed, and will certainly be judged of by the world. Be slow, therefore, and cautious in contracting intimacy; but when a virtuous friendship is once established, consider it as a sacred engagement. Expose not yourselves to the reproach of lightness and inconstancy, which always bespeak either a trifling or a base mind. Reveal none of the secrets of your friend. Be faithful to his interests. Forsake him not in danger. Abhor the thought of acquiring any advantage by his prejudice or hurt. “There is a friend that loveth at all times, and a brother that is born for adversity. Thine own friend, and thy father’s friend, forsake not.” Prov. xvii. 17.—xxvii. 10.

BLAIR.

ELIJAH.

2 *Kings* II. 8—12.

THE Prophet had finish’d the toils of his day,
And life, in its evening, was hasting away;
The strength of his manhood ebb’d fast in decline,
But his soul drew fresh vigour from converse divine.

For He whom he liv’d but to love and obey,
Now smil’d on his servant, and call’d him away;
Having succour’d and blessed him, all his life long,
Was now, and for ever, his joy and his song.

He stood by the flood,—cast on Jordan his eye,
Whose heaving wave deeply and proudly pass’d by:
At the noise of the waters his soul was not aw’d,
For he fear’d, and he lov’d, and he trusted his God.

At the stroke of his mantle, the billows divide ;
 The river recoiling, rolls back his strong tide ;
 The Prophet unwet, is permitted to tread
 Through the midst, by his Maker, invisibly led.

When thus to Elisha ; “ It is with the Lord,
 This day to appoint me my crown of reward ;
 Say what shall I give thee, ere yet he shall call,
 Or what shall I ask of the Giver of All ? ”

Elisha replies, “ Let that Spirit divine,
 Which in thee hath been mighty, henceforward be mine,
 In double proportion, oh, let it descend ;
 Unerring—my guide ; and unconquer’d—my friend ! ”

“ A hard thing thou askest ” the prophet replied,
 “ Yet still thy petition, shall not be denied,
 If thou see me what time I am caught up on high,
 On my way to the mansions of joy in the sky. ”

While thus they commune, and for parting prepare,
 The sound of the whirlwind is heard in the air ;
 Elijah is wrapt in the visions of light,
 As eternity opens her gates on his sight.

With a rush as of ocean storm, roaring aloud,
 Unfurl the dark folds of a tempest-wrought cloud,
 From the midst of the depth and the gloom of its shade,
 A chariot alights, and its coursers are stayed.

And the car was of fire, and the wheels whirling flame,
 And with thundering, and flashing, and rolling it came ;
 And each gleaming steed darted swift from on high,
 Like the volley-bolt hurl’d from the over-fraught sky.

But the flames were all love, of a fervour divine,
 There was nought of the flickering of wrath in their shine;
 There was nought of alarm—of mortality's dread,
 But peace o'er the scene calm serenity shed.

And the harp-tones of heaven breathed soft from afar,
 As the Prophet immortal ascended the car—
 As, casting one glance on a world left behind,
 Triumphant he rose on the wings of the wind.

The awe-struck Elisha in silence abode,
 Till his bright wheels retrac'd their ethereal road—
 Assur'd then he shouted, My Father, my Sire!—
 The horsemen of Israel—his chariot of fire!

He sees him no more!—Quick enkindles his soul,
 Love glows in his heart, like the altar's live coal;
 And Faith's eagle eye, that can look into heaven,
 With the mantle of prophecy, doubly are given!

Oh, Head of the Church! ever,—(even as then)
 Whose compassionate fail not to the children of men,
 When the righteous thou takest their crown to receive,
 Let thy Spirit descend on the mourners they leave!

When Thou callest the souls of Thy prophets away,
 Who have told of thy wonders of love in their day,
 Let thine angel o'ershadowing thy Church with his wings,
 Anoint of Thy people for priests and for kings.*

And exalt Thy great name, till the knowledge of Thee,
 Have hallow'd the earth, to the uttermost sea;
 Till the isles afar off, shall rejoice in Thy word;
 In the name of their Saviour, Christ Jesus, the Lord!

* Rev. i. 6.

ON CONVERSATION.

“ Thought, too deliver'd, is the more possess'd ;
Teaching, we learn ; and giving, we retain.”

WERE perfection always the result of practice, surely the art of conversing had reached its climax ; even amongst a people esteemed taciturn by their more voluble neighbours.

Were the activity of the mind commensurate with the activity of the tongue, we should not hear those complaints of tediousness in conversation, which pervade the mass of society ; even in an age that plumes itself upon intellectual attainments.

Whether it arise from that self-love, which is flattered in proportion to its own prominency, we know not ; but most certainly, diffidence, on this subject, is a circumstance of rare occurrence.

When a musician himself calls upon you to listen to his execution, or a painter voluntarily offers to exhibit the powers of his pencil, you naturally expect to meet with a *degree* of excellence at least :—but the demands of frivolous talkers are of all others the most exorbitant ;—they claim both your time and attention, tax your patience, and leave nothing behind that is worth retaining.

And yet “ the sweet music of speech,” flowing from a *full* mind, is a delightful banquet !—but it is a gift possessed by few. Many individuals, indeed, converse agreeably, who yet fail in awakening any great interest ; the reason is they do not think. They who think, whilst engaged in conversation, cause others to think with them, which is the great secret of fixing attention.

In the generality of persons there is a natural indolence that would rather receive an idea than give birth to one—this is a great fault;—dried fruits, however excellent, possess neither the flavour nor the delicious freshness of fruits that are newly gathered: and though the thoughts of the most vigorous minds may not always be stamped with entire originality, yet individuality continues to leave its own impress, enabling the intelligent observer to distinguish the original from the copy, mere verbiage from digested thought, pruriency of speech from mental plenitude.

Those who complain of the want of interesting subjects to converse about, will never discover them—will never be interesting companions; the merest trifle becomes a theme capable of fixing the attention, when thought surrounds it with its creative, vivifying influence. Some persons see nothing but the forms of things; if the form be beautiful they praise it, but proceed no further; this is of as little use as admiring the binding of a book, yet remaining ignorant of the wisdom which is contained within, and is only one grade removed from mere sense; for the eye informs us of the colour of the rose, and the sense of smell proclaims its fragrance; but it is the thinking mind alone that can perceive the exquisite beauty, skill, and wisdom displayed in its conformation.

Other minds find food for meditation in every object; to them, all nature teems with instruction—the sight of a flower, the wing of a bird—a child at play, a word spoken, opens to them interminable avenues of thought, for they behold infinity, every where, stamped upon creation. We shall now proceed to mention some of the most obvious faults in conversation; amongst these, *tediousness*, and the want of tact in the choice of sub-

jects, must claim a prominent place. If self-love did not blind us, we should never imagine that minute details of domestic transactions, local events, and, most of all, circumstantial descriptions of sickness, suitable only for the physician, could ever be agreeable. A simple inquiry respecting health should never be answered by a bulletin—a delicate mind will not obtrude those relations upon the ear of courtesy, which should be exclusively reserved for affection.

To be minute without tediousness is a great art, attained by few; therefore brevity is the safest plan to be pursued, except in instances where every circumstance is interesting. The mind, being then under the influence of strong excitement and expectation, is not displeased by a little circumlocution, which serves to whet curiosity and augment the interest of the sequel;—but on common occasions it is undesirable to dwell long.

Mere rehearsers of facts, individuals who possess no imagination, frequently betray so little address in their narratives, that you see the point at which they will arrive, a length of time ere they, themselves, have reached it. Every traveller knows how tedious a long unbroken road appears, and how much the distance seems increased by the eye travelling more rapidly than the feet. Yet abruptness, though a fault of less magnitude, is certainly a great imperfection. A lively imagination, like a young pointer, frequently starts more game than the sportsman can follow; therefore it should be carefully reined in, until the proper season; for when a subject has come fairly under discussion and the mind is pursuing it, it is not agreeable to be turned aside by irrelevant matter—not that every thing, which at first sight appears irrelevant, may ultimately prove so; for the rapidity with which some minds travel is no

argument that they will bring nothing home, or that the matter will be desultory;—on the contrary, the happiness of a simile, an appropriate comparison, the ready recollection of a circumstance bearing on the subject, may be most opportune and serve effectually to elicit the truth;—only suffer not the imagination to take precedence of the judgment.

Let no one, who wishes to be an agreeable companion, despise what may be termed negative qualities, for they not unfrequently obtain the meed of just approbation. To listen attentively may be classed amongst the number, for to listen well is no mean acquirement, and adds greatly to the enjoyment of conversation. If we would be heard with pleasure, we in return must listen with attention. A monopolizer of speech is rarely agreeable—one note in music, however sweet, does not constitute harmony, one species of fruit, however highly-flavoured, does not please every palate; besides, as no individual monopolizes good sense, so no one should exclusively monopolize attention. It was an admirable remark of Dr. Johnson's, and worthy a place in the minds of the learned and unlearned, that "No man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be that all *ever so little*."

To listen well, implies that you should follow the conversation attentively; otherwise, an expression of courtesy accompanied by a look that betrays you have been wandering will give offence. An observation, when judiciously made, encourages the speaker, and is much preferable to a simple yes, or a mere assent of the voice—the latter, especially, is a rude custom which should be avoided. To persons gifted with very active minds it is a difficult task, even when they are not guilty of interruption, to hear the subject to the end without suffering their understandings to start forward when

an observation is made which affords fresh food for investigation; yet this error should be guarded against, or, when the subject is concluded, the person who has been conversing will have the mortification to find he has been running a race alone; he thought he had a companion, but he discovers his mistake, and if not displeased, is at least disappointed. Amongst the advantages to be derived from listening attentively, the following remark of Dr. Johnson's deserves to be mentioned—"He that is a hearer in one place qualifies himself to become a speaker in another,"—thus the ear enriches the memory, which proves a most important auxiliary in conversation, provided it be judiciously used; but it requires wisdom to make a proper use of the wisdom of others.

There is one attainment in conversation which we have not yet mentioned, and it is the highest attainment—the great purpose for which speech was given, but the use of which belongs exclusively to the Christian—the art of leading the conversation to something good—something calculated to elevate the thoughts to our Creator; this delightful art may be managed with such skill, such delicacy of address, that it may be imperceptible to an outward observer, but it will be steadily pursued by the single eye of him who lives much in communion with his Maker—for where the love of our Redeemer pervades the heart it will flow to the lips, and imbue the language with something of superior wisdom and purity. And there is assuredly a *sweetness* in religious conversation, when judiciously introduced, that has a most cementing effect upon society—for where the love of God is the guiding principle of action, it sheds a tender, a sacred influence over

every subject,—as Cowper beautifully expresses in the following lines:—

“ When one, who holds communion with the skies,
Has fill’d his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
’Tis ev’n as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circuit wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied.”

A. H.

A SUMMER MORNING’S MEDITATION.

SHEW me a place of prayer,
That with the early sun,
I may arise and run,
And be the foremost there.

Enquirer, if thy breast
Waking from favour’d rest,
Perceives the Sun of righteousness
Ascending on the morning wing
The gladden’d heart to bless,
And peace and solace bring—
Take any right hand path, thou’lt soon be there,
Nor canst thou find a road, without a place of prayer.

If with the early morn
Bright rays the skies adorn,
Go forth before the day begins its care,
Behold the smiling fields, and let thy walk be prayer.

If thou’rt a son of toil,
Engaged to dress the soil,
A menial daughter who with hardship fed,
Art so much worthier of thy daily bread,
With cheerful heart resume thy usual care,
Submissively serene, and let thy toil be prayer.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON'S OBSERVATIONS ON PRAYER.

THE exercise of prayer being so important, and bearing so great a part in the life and comfort of a Christian, it deserves to be very seriously considered. We will, therefore, subjoin some few considerations concerning it.

Prayer may be considered in a three-fold notion. 1st, As a duty we owe to God. As it is from Him we expect and receive all, it is a very reasonable homage and acknowledgment, thus to testify the dependence of our being and life on him, and the dependence of our souls upon him, for being, and life, and all good; that we be daily suitors before his throne, and go to him for all. 2dly, As it constitutes the dignity and delight of a spiritual mind, to have so near access unto God, and such liberty to speak to him. 3dly, As a proper and sure means, by Divine appointment and promise, of obtaining at the hands of God those good things that are needful and convenient for us. And although some believers of lower knowledge do not (it may be) so distinctly know, and others not so particularly consider, all these in it; yet, there is a latent notion of them all in the heart of every godly person, which stirs them and puts them on to the constant use of prayer, and to a love of it. And as they are in these respects inclined and bent to the exercise of prayer, the Lord's ear is in like manner inclined to hear their prayer in these respects. He takes it well at their hands, that they do offer it up as due worship to him; that they desire thus as they can to serve him. He accepts of those offerings graciously, passes by the imperfections in them, and hath regard to their sincere intention and desire. It pleases him well that they delight in prayer, as converse

with him; that they love to be much with him, and to speak to him often, and still aspire, by this way, to more acquaintance with him, that they are ambitious of this. He willingly hears their prayers, as their necessities and desires: being both rich and bountiful, he loves to have blessings drawn out of his hands in that way. The Lord's treasury is always full, and therefore he is always communicative.

As to the qualification of the heart, it must be, in some measure, 1st, a holy heart. There must be no regarding iniquity, no entertaining of friendship with any sin, but a permanent love and desire of holiness. Thus, indeed, a man prays within himself as in a sanctified place, whither the Lord's ear inclines, as of old to the Temple. He needs not run superstitiously to a Church, &c. Pray inwardly, but first see whether thou art thyself a temple of God. The sanctified man's body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. vi. 19, and his soul is the priest in it that offers sacrifice; both holy to the Lord, consecrated to him. 2dly, It must be a believing heart, for there is no prayer without this. Faith is the very life of prayer, whence spring hope and comfort with it, to uphold the soul, and keep it steady under storms with the promises; and, as Aaron and Hur to Moses, keeping it from fainting, strengthening the hands when they would begin to fail. Such is the force of that word (Psalm x. 17,) for the preparing of the heart, which God gives as an assurance and pledge of his inclining his ear to hear, signifies the establishing of the heart; that, indeed, is a main point of its preparedness, and due disposition for prayer. Now this is done by faith, without which, the soul, as the Apostle St. James speaks, is a rolling unquiet thing, as a wave of the sea, of itself unstable as the water, and

then driven with the wind and tossed to and fro with every temptation. See and feel thine own unworthiness as much as thou canst, for thou art never bidden to believe in thyself; no, but that is countermanded as faith's great enemy. But what hath thy unworthiness to say against free promises of grace, which are the basis of thy faith? Psalm lxii. 8.—Trust in him at all times, ye people; and then pour out your hearts before him. Confide in him as a most faithful and powerful friend; and then you will open your hearts to him.

For the way of offering up prayer. It is a great art, a main point of the secret of religion, to be skilled in it, and of great concern for the comfort and success of it. Much is here to be considered; but, for the present, take these advices briefly.

1st.—Offer not to speak to him without the heart in some measure seasoned and prepossessed with the sense of his greatness and holiness. And there is much in this, considering wisely to whom we speak, the King, the Lord of Glory, and setting the soul before him in his presence, and then reflecting on ourselves, and seeing what we are, how wretched, and base, filthy, and unworthy of such access to so great a Majesty. The want of this preparing of the heart to speak in the Lord's ear, by the consideration of God and ourselves, is that which fills the exercise of prayer with much guiltiness; makes the heart careless and light, and irreverent, and so displeases the Lord, and disappoints ourselves of that comfort in prayer, and those answers of it, of which otherwise we should have more experience.

2dly.—When thou addresseth thyself to prayer, desire and depend upon the assistance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, without which thou art not truly able to pray. It is a supernatural work, and therefore

the principle of it must be supernatural. He that hath nothing of the Spirit of God, cannot pray at all, he may howl as a beast in his necessity or distress, or may speak words of prayer, as some birds learn the language of men—but pray, he cannot. And they that have that Spirit, ought to seek the movings and actual workings of it in them in prayer, as the particular help of their infirmities, teaching both what to ask (a thing which of ourselves we know not); and then enabling them to ask, breathing forth their desires in such sighs and groans, as are the breath, not simply of their own, but of God's Spirit.

3dly.—As these two precautions are to be taken before prayer; so, in the exercise of it, you should learn to keep a watchful eye over your own hearts throughout, for every step of the way, that they start not out. And in order to this, strive to keep up a continual remembrance of that presence of God, which, on the entry of the work, is to be set before the eye of the soul. And our endeavour ought to be, to fix it upon that view, that it turn not aside nor downwards, but from beginning to end keep sight of Him, who sees and marks whether we do so or not. They that are most inspective and watchful in this, will still be faulty in it; but, certainly, the less watchful, the more faulty. And this we ought to do, to be aspiring daily to more stability of mind in prayer, and to be driving out somewhat of that roving and wandering, which is so universal an evil, and certainly so grievous, not to those who have it most, but who observe and discover it most, and endeavour most against it. A strange thing! that the mind, even the renewed mind, should be so ready, not only at other times, but in the exercise of prayer, wherein we peculiarly come so near to God; yet, even then, to

slip out and leave him, and follow some poor vanity or other instead of him! Surely the godly man, when he thinks on this, is exceedingly ashamed of himself,—cannot tell what to think of it. God, his exceeding joy, whom, in his right thoughts, he esteems so much above the world and all things in it, yet to use him thus! when he is speaking to him, to break off from that, and hold discourse, or change a word with some base thought that steps in, and whispers to him; or, at the best, not to be steadfastly minding the Lord to whom he speaks, and possessed with the regard of his presence, and of his business and errand with him.

4thly.—And for success in prayer, exercising faith in it, it is altogether necessary to interpose the Mediator, and to look through him, and to speak and petition by him, who warns us of this, that there is no other way to speed. No man cometh to the Father, but by me.—John xiv. 6. As the Jews, when they prayed, looked towards the temple, where was the mercy-seat, and the peculiar presence of God; thus ought we, in all our praying, to look to Christ, who is our propitiatory, and in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily.—Col. xi. 9. The forgetting of this, may be the cause of our many disappointments.

5thly.—Fervency; not to seek coldly, that presages refusal. There must be fire in the sacrifice, otherwise it ascends not. There is no sacrifice without incense; and no incense without fire. Our remiss, dead hearts, are not likely to do much for the Church of God, nor ourselves.

But in this, there must be some difference between temporal and spiritual things. That prayer which is in the right strain, cannot be too fervent in any thing; but the desire of the thing in temporals may be

too earnest. A feverish distempered heat diseases the soul; therefore, in these things, a holy indifference concerning the particular, may, and should be joined with the fervency of prayer. But in spiritual things, there is no danger in vehemency of desire. . . .

THIRALDOM.

On that my prison doors were burst,
 And I were free to fly
 To the mountain stream, to slake my thirst,
 And gaze on the boundless sky!
 Where I might hear no sound
 Save the whispering of the trees;
 Or the carol of the lark on its airy round,
 Or the murmuring of the bees.

I would sit on the edge of the pebbly brook,
 As its waters are running away;
 And down on the still, green valley look,
 On the eve of a summer's day;
 I would climb on the path of the sloping hill,
 Rejoicing in the breeze;—
 Oh! blest to hold on my course at will,
 And shape it as I please.

To leave for ever behind me
 The city and its snares!
 To be sure that its fetters no more can bind me!
 Nor its weary wasting cares!
 To change its loud and deafening din
 For the quiet of the lonely glen!

To cast the slough of strife and sin,
 That cleaves to crowded men!
 To lay the intolerable burden down,
 Stretch out the unshackled limb, and use it as my own!

Say is not this the "fever of vain-longing?"
 These restless cravings, hopes that dare not be,
 Around my dark and silent pillow thronging,
 People my dreams with visions of the free
 And buoyant soul of youth—the rest of age,
 After the bitter years of life's stern pilgrimage!

And is it all too much that man should ask
 A few brief hours of quiet and repose,
 When he has finish'd his Egyptian task,
 Or ere the eternal curtain o'er him close?
 Let him dismiss the query, in his trust
 That the Omnipotent God is merciful and just.

Yes! for *He* gives the weary spirit rest,
 And seals it in the sepulchre; there sleeping
 Until the resurrection of the blest,
 :With all committed to His holy keeping,
 It shall come forth in glory, from its clay,
 To its own home in heaven, where tears are wiped
 away.

FREEDOM.

'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
 Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume;
 And we are weeds without it. All constraint,
 Except what wisdom lays on evil men,

Is evil: hurts the faculties, impedes
 Their progress in the road of science; blinds
 The eye-sight of Discovery; and begets
 In those that suffer it a sordid mind
 Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
 To be the tenant of man's noble form.
 Thee therefore still, blameworthy as thou art,
 With all thy loss of empire, and though squeezed
 By public exigence, till annual food
 Fails for the craving hunger of the state,
 Thee I account still happy, and the chief
 Among the nations, seeing thou art free;
 My native nook of earth! Thy clime is rude,
 Replete with vapours, and disposes much
 All hearts to sadness, and none more than mine:
 Thine unadulterate manners are less soft
 And plausible than social life requires,
 And thou hast need of discipline and art,
 To give thee what politer France receives
 From Nature's bounty—that humane address
 And sweetness, without which no pleasure is
 In converse, either starved by cold reserve,
 Or flush'd with fierce dispute, a senseless brawl:
 Yet being free I love thee: for the sake
 Of that one feature can be well content,
 Disgraced as thou hast been, poor as thou art,
 To seek no sublunary rest beside.
 But once enslaved, farewell! I could endure
 Chains no where patiently; and chains at home,
 Where I am free by birthright, not at all.
 Then what were left of roughness in the grain
 Of British natures, wanting its excuse
 That it belongs to freemen, would disgust
 And shock me. I should then with double pain

Feel all the rigour of thy fickle clime ;
 And, if I must bewail the blessing lost,
 For which our Hampdens and our Sidneys bled,
 I would at least bewail it under skies
 Milder, among a people less austere ;
 In scenes, which, having never known me free,
 Would not reproach me with the loss I felt.
 Do I forebode impossible events,
 And tremble at vain dreams? Heaven grant I may !
 But the age of virtuous politics is past,
 And we are deep in that of cold pretence.
 Patriots are grown too shrewd to be sincere,
 And we too wise to trust them. He that takes
 Deep in his soft credulity the stamp
 Design'd by loud declaimers on the part
 Of liberty, themselves the slaves of lust,
 Incurs derision for his easy faith
 And lack of knowledge, and with cause enough :
 For when was public virtue to be found,
 Where private was not ? Can he love the whole,
 Who loves no part ? He be a nation's friend,
 Who is in truth the friend of no man there ?
 Can he be strenuous in his country's cause,
 Who slights the charities, for whose dear sake
 That country, if at all, must be beloved ?

But there is yet a liberty, unsung
 By poets, and by senators unpraised,
 Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the powers
 Of earth and hell confederate take away :
 A liberty, which persecution, fraud,
 Oppression, prisons, have no power to bind ;
 Which whoso tastes can be enslaved no more.
 'Tis liberty of heart derived from Heaven,

Bought with HIS blood, who gave it to mankind,
 And seal'd with the same token. It is held
 By charter, and that charter sanction'd sure
 By the unimpeachable and awful oath
 And promise of a God. His other gifts
 All bear the royal stamp, that speaks them his,
 And are august; but this transcends them all.
 His other works, the visible display
 Of all-creating energy and might,
 Are grand, no doubt, and worthy of the word,
 That, finding an interminable space
 Unoccupied, has fill'd the void so well,
 And made so sparkling what was dark before.
 But these are not his glory. Man, 'tis true,
 Smit with the beauty of so fair a scene,
 Might well suppose the artificer divine
 Meant it eternal, had he not himself
 Pronounced it transient, glorious as it is,
 And, still designing a more glorious far,
 Doom'd it as insufficient for his praise.
 These therefore are occasional, and pass;
 Form'd for the confutation of the fool,
 Whose lying heart disputes against a God;
 That office served, they must be swept away.
 Not so the labours of his love: they shine
 In other heavens than these that we behold,
 And fade not. There is Paradise that fears
 No forfeiture, and of its fruits he sends
 Large prelibation oft to saints below.
 Of these the first in order, and the pledge
 And confident assurance of the rest,
 Is liberty; a flight into his arms,
 Ere yet mortality's fine threads give way,
 A clear escape from tyrannizing lust,

And full immunity from penal wo.

.

He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
 And all are slaves besides. There's not a chain,
 That hellish foes, confederate for his harm,
 Can wind around him, but he casts it off,
 With as much ease as Samson his green withes.
 He looks abroad into the varied field
 Of nature, and though poor, perhaps, compared
 With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
 Calls the delightful scenery all his own.
 His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
 And the resplendent rivers. His to enjoy
 With a propriety that none can feel,
 But who, with filial confidence inspired,
 Can lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
 And smiling say—"My Father made them all!"
 Are they not his by a peculiar right,
 And by an emphasis of interest his,
 Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy,
 Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind
 With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love,
 That plann'd, and built, and still upholds, a world
 So clothed with beauty for rebellious man?
 Yes—ye may fill your garners, ye that reap
 The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
 In senseless riot; but ye will not find
 In feast, or in the chase, in song or dance,
 A liberty like his, who unimpeach'd
 Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,
 Appropriates nature as his Father's work,
 And has a richer use of yours than you.
 He is indeed a freeman. Free by birth
 Of no mean city; plann'd or e'er the hills

Were built, the fountains open'd, or the sea
 With all his roaring multitude of waves.
 His freedom is the same in every state ;
 And no condition of this changeful life,
 So manifold in cares, whose every day
 Brings its own evil with it, makes it less :
 For he has wings, that neither sickness, pain,
 Nor penury, can cripple or confine.
 No nook so narrow but he spreads them there
 With ease, and is at large. The oppressor holds
 His body bound ; but knows not what a range
 His spirit takes, unconscious of a chain ;
 And that to bind him is a vain attempt
 Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells.

.
 So reads he nature, whom the lamp of truth
 Illuminates. Thy lamp, mysterious Word !
 Which whoso sees no longer wanders lost,
 With intellects benazed in endless doubt,
 But runs the road of wisdom. Thou hast built
 With means that were not till by thee employ'd,
 Worlds, that had never been hadst thou in strength
 Been less, or less benevolent than strong.
 They are thy witnesses, who speak thy power
 And goodness infinite, but speak in ears
 That hear not, or receive not their report.
 In vain thy creatures testify of thee,
 Till thou proclaim thyself. Theirs is indeed
 A teaching voice ; but 'tis the praise of thine,
 That whom it teaches it makes prompt to learn,
 And with the boon gives talents for its use.
 Till thou art heard, imaginations vain
 Possess the heart, and fables false as hell ;
 Yet, deemed oracular, lure down to death

The uninform'd and heedless souls of men.
 We give to chance, blind chance, ourselves as blind,
 The glory of thy work ; which yet appears
 Perfect and unimpeachable of blame,
 Challenging human scrutiny, and proved
 Then skilful most when most severely judged.
 But chance is not ; or is not where thou reign'st :
 Thy providence forbids that fickle power
 (If power she be, that works but to confound)
 To mix her wild vagaries with thy laws.
 Yet thus we dote, refusing while we can
 Instruction, and inventing to ourselves
 Gods such as guilt makes welcome ; gods that sleep,
 Or disregard our follies, or that sit
 Amused spectators of this bustling stage.
 Thee we reject, unable to abide
 Thy purity, till pure as thou art pure,
 Made such by thee, we love thee for that cause,
 For which we shunn'd and hated thee before.
 Then we are free. Then liberty, like day,
 Breaks on the soul, and by a flash from heaven
 Fires all the faculties with glorious joy.
 A voice is heard, that mortal ears hear not
 Till thou hast touch'd them ; 'tis the voice of song—
 A loud Hosanna sent from all thy works ;
 Which he that hears it with a shout repeats,
 And adds his rapture to the general praise.
 In that blest moment Nature, throwing wide
 Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile
 The Author of her beauties, who, retired
 Behind his own creation, works unseen
 By the impure, and hears his power denied.
 Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
 Their only point of rest, eternal Word !

From thee departing, they are lost, and rove
 At random, without honour, hope, or peace.
 From thee is all that soothes the life of man,
 His high endeavour, and his glad success,
 His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.
 But O thou bounteous Giver of all good,
 Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown !
 Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor ;
 And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away.

COWPER.

DRESS.

ONE cannot forbear reflecting on the too prevailing humour of being fond and ostentatious of dress. What an abject and mistaken ambition is this ! How unworthy the dignity of immortal, and the wisdom of rational beings ! Especially, since these little productions of the earth have indisputably the pre-eminence in such outward embellishments. Go, clothe thyself with purple and fine linen ; trick thyself up in all the gay attire which the shuttle or the needle can furnish ; yet know, to the mortification of thy vanity, that the native elegance of a common daisy eclipses all this elaborate finery. Nay, wert thou decked like some illustrious princess on her coronation day, in all the splendour of royal apparel ; couldst thou equal even Solomon, in the height of his magnificence and glory ; yet would the meanest among the flowery populace outshine thee ; every discerning eye would give the preference to those beauties of the ground. Scorn, then, to borrow thy recommendations from a neat disposition of threads and a curious arrangement of colours. Assume a becoming

greatness of temper; let thy endowments be of the immortal kind; study to be all-glorious within; be clothed with humility; wear the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. To say all in a word, put on the Lord Jesus Christ; Rom. xiii. 14. Let his blood be sprinkled upon thy conscience, and it shall be whiter than the virgin snow; let his righteousness, like a spotless robe, adorn thy inner man, and thou shalt be amiable even in the most distinguishing eye of God. Let his blessed Spirit dwell in thy heart, and, under his sanctifying operations, thou shalt be made partaker of a divine nature.

These are real excellencies; truly noble accomplishments these. In this manner be arrayed, be beautified; and thou wilt not find a rival in the feathers of a peacock, or the foliation of a tulip. These will exalt thee far above the low pretensions of lace and embroidery: these will prepare thee to stand in the beatific presence, and to take thy seat among the angels of light.

HERVEY.

CHARACTER OF THE GREAT FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY.

NEVER was there on earth any person of so extraordinary a character as the Founder of our religion. In him we uniformly see a mildness, dignity, and composure, and a perfection of wisdom and of goodness, that plainly point him out as a superior being. But his superiority was all in his own divine mind. He had none of those outward advantages that have distinguished all other lawgivers. He had no influence in the state; he had no wealth; he aimed at no worldly power. He was the son of a carpenter's wife, and he was himself a carpen-

ter. So poor were his reputed parents, that at the time of his birth, his mother could obtain no better lodging than a stable ; and so poor was he himself, that he often had no lodging at all. That he had no advantages of education, we may infer from the surprise expressed by his neighbours on hearing him speak in the synagogue : “ Whence hath this man these things ? What wisdom is this which is given him ? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary ? Are not his brethren and sisters with us ? ” This point, however, we need not insist on ; as from no education, that his own or any other country could have afforded, was it possible for him to derive that supernatural wisdom and power, that sanctity of life, and that purity of doctrine, which so eminently distinguish him. His first adherents were a few fishermen ; for whom he was so far from making any provision, that, when he sent them out to preach repentance and heal diseases, they were, by his desire, furnished with nothing, but one coat, a pair of sandals, and a staff. He went about in great humility and meekness, doing good, teaching wisdom, and glorifying God, for the space of about three years after the commencement of his ministry ; and then, as he himself had foreseen and foretold, he was publicly crucified.—This is the great personage, who at this day gives law to the world. This is he, who has been the author of virtue and happiness to millions and millions of the human race. And this is he whom the wisest and best men that ever lived have revered as a Divine Person, and gloried in as the deliverer and saviour of mankind.

DR. BEATTIE.

ON THE BEAUTIES OF THE PSALMS.

GREATNESS confers no exemption from the cares and sorrows of life : its share of them frequently bears a melancholy proportion to its exaltation. This the monarch of Israel experienced. He sought in piety, that peace which he could not find in empire ; and alleviated the disquietude of state, with the exercises of devotion. His invaluable Psalms convey those comforts to others, which they afforded to himself. Composed upon particular occasions, yet designed for general use ; delivered out as services for Israelites under the Law, yet no less adapted to the circumstances of Christians under the Gospel ; they present religion to us in the most engaging dress ; communicating truths which philosophy could never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal ; while history is made the vehicle of prophecy, and creation lends all its charms to paint the glories of redemption. Calculated alike to profit and to please, they inform the understanding, elevate the affections, and entertain the imagination. Indited under the influence of HIM, to whom all hearts are known, and all events foreknown, they suit mankind in all situations ; grateful as the manna which descended from above, and conformed itself to every palate.

The fairest productions of human wit, after a few perusals, like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and lose their fragraney : but these unfading plants of paradise become, as we are accustomed to them, still more and more beautiful ; their bloom appears to be daily heightened ; fresh odours are emitted, and new sweets extracted from them. He who hath once tasted their excellencies, will desire to taste them again ; and he who tastes them oftenest, will relish them best.

And now, could the author flatter himself, that any one would take half the pleasure in reading his work, which he has taken in writing it, he would not fear the loss of his labour. The employment detached him from the bustle and hurry of life, the din of politics, and the noise of folly. Vanity and vexation flew away for a season; care and disquietude came not near his dwelling. He arose, fresh as the morning, to his task; the silence of the night invited him to pursue it; and he can truly say, that food and rest were not preferred before it. Every psalm improved infinitely upon his acquaintance with it, and no one gave him uneasiness but the last: for then he grieved that his work was done. Happier hours than those which have been spent in these meditations on the Songs of Sion, he never expects to see in this world. Very pleasantly did they pass; they moved smoothly and swiftly along: for when thus engaged, he counted no time. They are gone; but they have left a relish and a fragrance upon the mind: and the remembrance of them is sweet.

HORNE.

ON THE TRUE HONOUR OF MAN.

THE proper honour of man arises not from some of those splendid actions and abilities, which excite high admiration. Courage and prowess, military renown, signal victories and conquests, may render the name of a man famous, without rendering his character truly honourable. To many brave men, to many heroes renowned in story, we look up with wonder. Their exploits are recorded. Their praises are sung. They stand as on an eminence, above the rest of mankind. Their emi-

nence, nevertheless, may not be of that sort, before which we bow with inward esteem and respect. Something more is wanted for that purpose, than the conquering arm, and the intrepid mind. The laurels of the warrior must at all times be dyed in blood, and bedewed with the tears of the widow and the orphan. But if they have been stained by rapine and inhumanity; if sordid avarice has marked his character; or low and gross sensuality has degraded his life; the great hero sinks into a little man. What, at a distance, or on a superficial view, we admired, becomes mean, perhaps odious, when we examine it more closely. It is like the colossal statue, whose immense size struck the spectator afar off with astonishment; but when nearly viewed, it appears disproportioned, unshapely, and rude.

Observations of the same kind may be applied to all the reputation derived from civil accomplishments; from the refined politics of the statesman; or the literary efforts of genius and erudition. These bestow, and within certain bounds, ought to bestow, eminence and distinction on men. They discover talents which in themselves are shining; and which become highly valuable, when employed in advancing the good of mankind. Hence, they frequently give rise to fame. But a distinction is to be made between fame, and true honour. The statesman, the orator, or the poet, may be famous; while yet the man himself is far from being honoured. We envy his abilities. We wish to rival them. But we would not choose to be classed with him who possesses them. Instances of this sort are too often found in every record of ancient or modern history.

From all this it follows, that in order to discern where man's true honour lies, we must look, not to any adventitious circumstances of fortune; not to any single

sparkling quality; but to the whole of what forms a man: what entitles him, as such, to rank high among that class of beings to which he belongs; in a word, we must look to the mind and the soul. A mind superior to fear, to selfish interest, and corruption; a mind governed by the principles of uniform rectitude and integrity; the same in prosperity and adversity; which no bribe can seduce, nor terror overawe; neither by pleasure melted into effeminacy, nor by distress sunk into dejection: such is the mind which forms the distinction and eminence of man.—One, who in no situation of life is either ashamed or afraid of discharging his duty, and acting his proper part with firmness and constancy; true to the God whom he worships, and true to the faith in which he professes to believe; full of affection to his brethren of mankind; faithful to his friends, generous to his enemies, warm with compassion to the unfortunate; self-denying to little private interests and pleasures, but zealous for public interest and happiness; magnanimous, without being proud; humble, without being mean; just, without being harsh; simple in his manners, but manly in his feelings; on whose word we can entirely rely; whose countenance never deceives us; whose professions of kindness are the effusions of his heart: one, in fine, whom, independently of any views of advantage, we should choose for a superior, could trust in as a friend, and could love as a brother—this is the man, whom in our heart, above all others, we do, we must honour.

BLAIR.

THOUGHTS ON MORTALITY.

Romans v. 12: So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.—Job iii. 12: The small and the great are there.—Zachariah i. 5: Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?

O why should the spirit of mortal be proud!
Like a fast flitting meteor, a fast flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passes from life to his rest in the grave.

For the multitude goes,—like the flower and the weed,
That wither away to let others succeed;
And the multitude comes,—even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that hath often been told!

For we are the same things that our fathers have been,
We see the same sights that our fathers have seen,
We drink the same stream, and we feel the same sun,
And we run the same course that our fathers have run.

They loved—but their story we cannot unfold;
They scorned—but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved—but no wail from their slumbers may
 come;
They joyed—but the voice of their gladness is dumb!

They died—aye, they died! and we things that are now,
Who walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
Who make in their dwellings a transient abode,
Meet the changes they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea, hope and despondence, and pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together like sunshine and rain;
And the smile and the tear, and the song and the dirge,
Still follow each other like surge upon surge.

'Tis the close of an eye, 'tis the draw of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death;
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud—
O why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

KNOX'S SONGS OF ISRAEL.

"BEHOLD MY MOTHER AND MY BRETHREN."

Who is my mother? or my brethren?
He spake, and looked on them who sat around,
With a meek smile of pity, blent with love,
More melting than e'er gleamed from human face,
As when a sunbeam, through a summer morn,
Shines mildly on a little hill side flock;
And with what look of love he said,—Behold
My mother and my brethren; for I say,
That whosoe'er shall do the will of God,
He is my brother, sister, mother, all.

INNOCENCE.

O INNOCENCE! how glorious and happy a portion art
thou to the breast that possesses thee; thou fearest
neither the eyes nor the tongues of men. Truth, the
most powerful of all things, is thy strongest friend; and
the brighter the light in which thou art displayed, the
more it discovers thy transcendant beauties.

TIME.

STILL on its march, unnoticed and unfelt,
 Moves on our being. We do live and breathe,
 And we are gone. The spoiler heeds us not.
 We have our spring-time and our rottenness ;
 And as we fall another race succeeds,
 To perish likewise.—Meanwhile Nature smiles—
 The seasons run their round—The Sun fulfils
 His annual course—and heaven and earth remain
 Still changing, yet unchanged—still doom'd to feel
 Endless mutation in perpetual rest.
 Where are conceal'd the days which have elapsed ?
 Hid in the mighty cavern of *the past*,
 They rise upon us only to appal,
 By indistinct and half-glimpsed images,
 Misty, gigantic, huge, obscure, remote.

Oh, it is fearful, on the midnight couch,
 When the rude rushing winds forget to rave,
 And the pale moon, that through the casement high
 Surveys the sleepless muser, stamps the hour
 Of utter silence ; it is fearful then
 To steer the mind, in deadly solitude,
 Up the vague stream of probability ;
 To wind the mighty secrets of *the past*,
 And turn the key of Time ! Oh ! who can strive
 To comprehend the vast, the awful truth,
 Of the *eternity that hath gone by*,
 And not recoil from the dismaying sense
 Of human impotence ? The life of man
 Is summ'd in birth-days and in sepulchres :
 But the Eternal God had no beginning ;
 He hath no end. Time had been with him
 For *everlasting*, ere the dædal world

Rose from the gulf in loveliness.—Like him
 It knew no source : like him 'twas uncreate.
 What is it then ? the past Eternity !
 We comprehend a *future* without end,
 We feel it possible that even yon sun
 May roll for ever : but we shrink amazed—
 We stand aghast, when we reflect that Time
 Knew no commencement. That heap age on age,
 And million upon million, without end,
 And we shall never span the void of days
 That were, and are not but in retrospect.
 The Past is an unfathomable depth,
 Beyond the span of thought ; 'tis an elapse
 Which hath no mensuration, but hath been
 For ever and for ever.

Change of days

To us is sensible ; and each revolve
 Of the recording sun conducts us on
 Farther in life, and nearer to our goal.
 Not so with Time,—mysterious chronicler !
 He knoweth not mutation ;—centuries
 Are to his being as a day, and days
 As centuries.—Time past, and Time to come,
 Are always equal ; when the world began
 God had existed from eternity.

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Now look on man

Myriads of ages hence.—Hath time elapsed ?
 Is he not standing in the self-same place
 Where once we stood ?—The same eternity
 Hath gone before him, and is yet to come ;
 His *past* is not of longer span than ours,
 Though myriads of ages intervened ;
 For who can add to what has neither sum,

Nor bound, nor source, nor estimate, nor end?
 Oh, who can compass the Almighty mind?
 Who can unlock the secrets of the High?
 In speculation of an altitude
 Sublime as this, our reason stands confess'd
 Foolish, and insignificant, and mean.
 Who can apply the futile argument
 Of finite beings to infinity?
 He might as well compress the universe
 Into the hollow compass of a gourd,
 Scoop'd out by human art; or bid the whale
 Drink up the sea it swims in.—Can the less
 Contain the greater? or the dark obscure
 Infold the glories of meridian day?
 What does Philosophy impart to man
 But undiscover'd wonders?—Let her soar
 Even to her proudest heights—to where she caught
 The soul of Newton and of Socrates,
 She but extends the scope of wild amaze
 And admiration. All her lessons end
 In wider views of God's unfathom'd depths.

* * * * * *

Oh! I would walk

A weary journey to the farthest verge
 Of the big world, to kiss that good man's hand,
 Who, in the blaze of wisdom and of art,
 Preserves a lowly mind; and to his God,
 Feeling the sense of his own littleness,
 Is as a child in meek simplicity!
 What is the pomp of learning? the parade
 Of letters and of tongues? Even as the mists
 Of the gray morn before the rising sun,
 That pass away and perish.

Earthly things

Are but the transient pageants of an hour ;
 And earthly pride is like the passing flower,
 That springs to fall, and blossoms but to die.
 'Tis as the tower erected on a cloud,
 Baseless and silly as the schoolboy's dream.
 Ages and epochs that destroy our pride,
 And then record its downfall, what are they
 But the poor creatures of man's teeming brain !
 Hath Heaven its ages ? or doth Heaven preserve
 Its stated eras ? Doth the Omnipotent
 Hear of to-morrows or of yesterdays ?
 There is to God nor future nor a past ;
 Throned in his might, all times to him are present ;
 He hath no lapse, no past, no time to come ;
 He sees before him one eternal *now*.
 Time moveth not !—our being 'tis that moves :
 And we, swift gliding down life's rapid stream,
 Dream of swift ages and revolving years,
 Ordain'd to chronicle our passing days ;
 So the young sailor in the gallant bark,
 Scudding before the wind, beholds the coast
 Receding from his eye, and thinks the while,
 Struck with amaze, that he is motionless,
 And that the land is sailing.

Such, alas!

Are the illusions of this Proteus life ;
 All, all is false : through every phasis still
 'Tis shadowy and deceitful. It assumes
 The semblances of things and specious shapes ;
 But the lost traveller might as soon rely
 On the evasive spirit of the marsh
 Whose lantern beams, and vanishes, and flits,
 O'er bog, and rock, and pit, and hollow way,

As we on its appearances.

On earth

There is nor certainty nor stable hope.
 As well the weary mariner, whose bark
 Is toss'd beyond Cimmerian Bosphorus,
 Where Storm and Darkness hold their drear domain,
 And sunbeams never penetrate, might trust
 To expectation of serener skies,
 And linger in the very jaws of death,
 Because some peevish cloud were opening,
 Or the loud storm had bated in its rage ;
 As we look forward in this vale of tears
 To permanent delight—from some slight glimpse
 Of shadowy unsubstantial happiness.

The good man's hope is laid far, far beyond
 The sway of tempests, or the furious sweep
 Of mortal desolation.—He beholds,
 Unapprehensive, the gigantic stride
 Of rampant Ruin, or the unstable waves
 Of dark Vicissitude.—Even in death,
 In that dread hour, when with a giant pang,
 Tearing the tender fibres of the heart,
 The immortal spirit struggles to be free,
 Then, even then, that hope forsakes him not,
 For it exists beyond the narrow verge
 Of the cold sepulchre.—The petty joys
 Of fleeting life indignantly it spurn'd,
 And rested on the bosom of its God.
 This is man's only reasonable hope ;
 And 'tis a hope which, cherish'd in the breast,
 Shall not be disappointed.—Even he,
 The Holy One—Almighty—who elanced
 The rolling world along its airy way,
 Even He will deign to smile upon the good,

And welcome him to those celestial seats,
 Where joy and gladness hold their changeless reign,
 Thou, proud man, look upon yon starry vault,
 Survey the countless gems which richly stud,
 The Night's imperial chariot ;—Telescopes
 Will shew thee myriads more innumeros
 Than the sea sand ;—each of those little lamps
 Is the great source of light, the central sun
 Round which some other mighty sisterhood
 Of planets travel, every planet stock'd
 With living beings impotent as thee.
 Now, proud man ! now, where is thy greatness fled ?
 What art thou in the scale of universe ?
 Less, less than nothing ?—Yet of thee the God
 Who built this wondrous frame of worlds is careful,
 As well as of the mendicant who begs
 The leavings of thy table. And shalt thou
 Lift up thy thankless spirit, and contemn
 His heavenly providence ! Deluded fool,
 Even now the thunderbolt is wing'd with death,
 Even now thou totterest on the brink of hell.

KIRKE WHITE.

MAJESTY OF GOD IN HIS WORKS.

WHY are the works of God so splendid ? Why is there such magnificence in every thing we see ? Why do we behold such multifarious, such numberless beauties, each object surpassing the other, and clothed with charms peculiar to itself ? Why do I every where find new subjects of admiration and astonishment ? For this reason : that I may never cease to admire and adore that great Being, who is infinitely greater, more sublime,

and more magnificent than any of the objects which he has presented to my senses; that I might be led to this reflection: If the works are so perfect, how glorious must be the maker of them! If the beauty of that which he has created is inexpressibly great, infinitely greater must be that Being who surveys all creation at a single glance.

If the sun has a splendour which my eyes cannot endure, can we be surprised, that he who kindled this brilliant orb should dwell in light inaccessible to human vision? Can he be less wonderful than the works which his hand hath formed? The more marvellous are his works, the more he himself must excite astonishment. Were we capable of comprehending the full extent of his greatness, he would cease to be God, or we to be men.

Where then can I more enlarge my views, where can I acquire greater knowledge and more sublime ideas than in contemplating the illimitable power and majesty of the Godhead? Where else can I procure, for all the faculties of my soul, that energy and vigour which befits me for the enjoyment of endless felicity? The more my mind is here expanded and enlarged by contemplating the greatest of all Beings, the more will it be capable of comprehending his grandeur and majesty in a future state.

STURM.

THE NOMINAL CHRISTIAN DEFECTIVE IN LOVE TO GOD.

LET the question be fairly put to the test. Concerning the proper marks and evidences of affection, there can

be little dispute. Let the most candid investigator examine the character, and conduct, and language of the persons to whom we have been speaking; and he will be compelled to acknowledge, that so far as love towards the supreme Being is in question, these marks and evidences are no where to be met with. It is in itself a decisive evidence of a contrary feeling in those nominal Christians, that they find no pleasure in the service and worship of God. Their devotional acts resemble less the free-will offerings of a grateful heart, than that constrained and reluctant homage which is exacted by some hard master from his oppressed dependents; and paid with cold sullenness, and slavish apprehension. It was the very charge brought by God against his ungrateful people of old, that, while they called him Sovereign and Father, they withheld from him the regards which severally belong to those respected and endearing appellations. Thus we likewise think it enough to offer to the most excellent and amiable of Beings, to our supreme and unwearied Benefactor, a dull, artificial, heartless gratitude, of which we should be ashamed in the case of a fellow-creature, who had ever so small a claim on our regard and thankfulness.

It may be of infinite use to establish in our minds a strong and habitual sense of that first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." This passion, operative and vigorous in its very nature, like a master spring, would set in motion, and maintain in action all the complicated movements of the human soul.

It would also soon terminate many practical questions concerning the allowableness of certain compliances; questions which, with other similar difficulties, are often

only the cold offspring of a spirit of reluctant submission, and cannot stand the encounter of this trying principle. If, for example, it were disputed, whether or not the law of God were so strict as had been stated, in condemning the slightest infraction of its precepts; yet, when, from the precise demands of justice, the appeal shall be made to the more generous principle of love, there would be at once an end of the discussion. Fear will deter from acknowledged crimes, and self-interest will bribe to laborious services; but it is the peculiar glory, and the very characteristic, of this more generous passion, to shew itself in ten thousand little and undefinable arts of sedulous attention, which love alone can pay; and of which, when paid, love alone can estimate the value. Love outruns the deductions of reasoning; it scorns the refuge of casuistry; it requires not the slow process of laborious and undeniable proof that one action would be injurious and offensive, or another beneficial or gratifying, to the object of its affection. The least hint, the slightest surmise, is sufficient to make it start from the former, and fly with eagerness to the latter.

WILBERFORCE.

PLEASURES OF SCIENCE.

THE highest of all our gratifications in the contemplations of science remains; we are raised by them to an understanding of the infinite wisdom and goodness which the Creator has displayed in his works. Not a step can we take in any direction, without perceiving the most extraordinary traces of design; and the skill everywhere conspicuous, is calculated, in so vast a proportion of

instances, to promote the happiness of living creatures, and especially of our own kind, that we can feel no hesitation in concluding that, if we knew the whole scheme of Providence, every part would be found in harmony with a plan of absolute benevolence. Independently, however, of this most consoling inference, the delight is inexpressible of being able to follow, as it were, with our eyes, the marvellous works of the Great Architect of Nature—to trace the unbounded power and exquisite skill which are exhibited in the most minute, as well as the mightiest parts of his system. The pleasure derived from this study is unceasing, and so various, that it never tires the appetite. But it is unlike the low gratifications of sense in another respect: while those hurt the health, debase the understanding, and corrupt the feelings, this elevates and refines our nature, teaching us to look upon all earthly objects as insignificant and below our notice, except the pursuit of knowledge and the cultivation of virtue; and giving a dignity and importance to the enjoyment of life, which the frivolous and the grovelling cannot even comprehend.

Let us, then, conclude, that the Pleasures of Science go hand in hand with the solid benefits derived from it; that they tend, unlike other gratifications, not only to make our lives more agreeable, but better; and that a rational being is bound, by every motive of interest and of duty, to direct his mind towards pursuits which are found to be the sure path of Virtue as well as of happiness.

BROUGHAM.

THE DELUSIONS OF LIFE.

IF the situation of man in the present life be considered in all its relations and dependencies, a striking inconsistency will be apparent to a very cursory observer. We have sure warrant for believing that our abode here is to form a comparatively insignificant part of our existence, and that on our conduct in this life will depend the happiness of the life to come; yet our actions daily give the lie to this proposition, inasmuch as we commonly act like men who have no thought but for the present scene, and to whom the grave is the boundary of anticipation. But this is not the only paradox which humanity furnishes to the eyes of a thinking man. It is very generally the case, that we spend our whole lives in the pursuit of objects which common experience informs us are not capable of conferring that pleasure and satisfaction which we expect from their enjoyment. Our views are uniformly directed to one point: *happiness*, in whatever garb it be clad, and under whatever figure shadowed, is the great aim of the busy multitudes, whom we behold toiling through the vale of life, in such an infinite diversity of occupation and disparity of views. But the misfortune is, that we seek for happiness where she is not to be found, and the cause of wonder, that the experience of ages should not have guarded us against so fatal and so universal an error.

It would be an amusing speculation to consider the various points after which our fellow-mortals are incessantly straining, and in the possession of which they have placed that imaginary chief good which we are all doomed to covet, but which perhaps, none of us, in this sublunary state, can attain. At present, however, we are led to considerations of a more important nature.

We turn from the inconsistencies observable in the prosecution of our subordinate pursuits, from the partial follies of individuals, to the general delusion which seems to envelope the whole human race :—the delusion under whose influence they lose sight of the chief end of their being, and cut down the sphere of their hopes and enjoyments to a few rolling years, and that, too, in a scene where they know there is neither perfect fruition nor permanent delight.

The faculty of contemplating mankind in the abstract, apart from those prepossessions which, both by nature and the power of habitual associations, would intervene to cloud our view, is only to be obtained by a life of virtue and constant meditation, by temperance, and purity of thought. Whenever it is attained, it must greatly tend to correct our motives—to simplify our desires—and to excite a spirit of contentment and pious resignation. We then, at length, are enabled to contemplate our being, in all its bearings, and in its full extent, and the result is, that superiority to common views and indifference to the things of this life, which should be the fruit of all *true* philosophy, and which, therefore, are the more peculiar fruits of that system of philosophy which is called the Christian.

To a mind thus sublimed, the great mass of mankind will appear like men led astray by the workings of wild and distempered imaginations—visionaries who are wandering after the phantoms of their own teeming brains; and their anxious solicitude for mere matters of worldly accommodation and ease will seem more like the effects of insanity than of prudent foresight, as they are esteemed. To the awful importance of futurity he will observe them utterly insensible; and he will see with astonishment the few allotted years of human life

wasted in providing abundance they will never enjoy, while the eternity they are placed here to prepare for, scarcely employs a moment's consideration. And yet the mass of these poor wanderers in the ways of error have the light of truth shining on their very foreheads. They have the revelation of Almighty God himself, to declare to them the folly of worldly cares, and the necessity for providing for a future state of existence. They know, by the experience of every preceding generation, that a very small portion of joy is allowed to the poor sojourners in this vale of tears, and that too, embittered with much pain and fear; and yet every one is willing to flatter himself that he shall fare better than his predecessor in the same path, and that happiness will smile on him which hath frowned on all his progenitors.

Still it would be wrong to deny the human race all claim to temporal felicity. There may be comparative, although very little positive happiness;—whoever is more exempt from the cares of the world and the calamities incident to humanity—whoever enjoys more contentment of mind, and is more resigned to the dispensations of Divine Providence—in a word, whoever possesses more of the true spirit of Christianity than his neighbours, is comparatively happy. But the number of these, it is to be feared, is very small. Were all men equally enlightened by the illuminations of truth, as emanating from the spirit of Jehovah himself, they would all concur in the pursuit of virtuous ends by virtuous means:—as there would be no vice, there would be very little infelicity. Every pain would be met with fortitude, every affliction with resignation. We should then all look back to the past with complacency, and to the future with hope. Even this unstable

state of being would have many exquisite enjoyments—the principal of which would be the anticipation of that approaching state of beatitude to which we might then look with confidence, through the medium of that atonement of which we should be partakers, and our acceptance, by virtue of which, would be sealed by that purity of mind of which human nature is, *of itself*, incapable. But it is from the mistakes and miscalculations of mankind, to which their fallen natures are continually prone, that arises that flood of misery which overwhelms the whole race, and resounds wherever the footsteps of man have penetrated. It is the lamentable error of placing happiness in vicious indulgences, or thinking to pursue it by vicious means. It is the blind folly of sacrificing the welfare of the future to the opportunity of immediate guilty gratification which destroys the harmony of society, and poisons the peace, not only of the immediate procreators of the errors—not only of the identical actors of the vices themselves, but of all those of their fellows who fall within the reach of their influence or example, or who are in any wise connected with them by the ties of blood.

I would therefore exhort you earnestly—you who are yet unskilled in the ways of the world—to beware on what object you centre your hopes. Pleasures may allure—pride or ambition may stimulate, but their fruits are hollow and deceitful, and they afford no sure, no solid satisfaction. You are placed on the earth in a state of probation—your continuance here will be, at the longest, a very short period, and when you are called from hence, you plunge into an eternity, the completion of which will be in correspondence to your past life, unutterably happy or inconceivably miserable. Your fate will probably depend on your early pursuits

—it will be these which will give the turn to your character and to your pleasures. I beseech you, therefore, with a meek and lowly spirit, to read the pages of that Book, which the wisest and best of men have acknowledged to be the word of God. You will there find a rule of moral conduct, such as the world never had any idea of before its divulcation. If you covet earthly happiness, it is only to be found in the path you will find there laid down, and I can confidently promise you, in a life of simplicity and purity, a life passed in accordance with the Divine word, such substantial bliss, such unruffled peace, as is nowhere else to be found. All other schemes of earthly pleasure are fleeting and unsatisfactory. They all entail upon them repentance and bitterness of thought. This alone endureth for ever—this alone embraces equally the present and the future—this alone can arm a man against every calamity—can alone shed the balm of peace over that scene of life when pleasures have lost their zest, and the mind can no longer look forward to the dark and mysterious future. Above all, beware of the *ignis fatuus* of false philosophy: that must be a very defective system of ethics which will not bear a man through the most trying stage of his existence, and I know of none that will do it but the Christian.

KIRKE WHITE.

VANITY INSCRIBED ON ALL THINGS.

TIME, like a long-flowing stream, makes haste into eternity, and is for ever lost and swallowed up there; and, while it is hastening to its period, it sweeps away all things with it which are not immortal. There is a

limit appointed by Providence to the duration of all the pleasant and desirable scenes of life, to all the works of the hands of men, with all the glories and excellencies of animal nature, and all that is made of flesh and blood. Let us not dote upon any thing here below, for heaven hath inscribed vanity upon it. The moment is hastening when the decree of heaven shall be uttered, and Providence shall pronounce upon every glory of the earth, "Its time shall be no longer."

What is that stately building, that princely palace, which now entertains and amuses our sight with ranks of marble columns and wide spreading arches, that gay edifice, which enriches our imagination with a thousand royal ornaments, and a profusion of costly and glittering furniture? Time, and all its circling hours, with a swift wing, are brushing it away; decay steals upon it insensibly, and a few years hence it shall lie in mouldering ruin and desolation! Unhappy possessor, if he has no better inheritance?

What are those fine and elegant gardens, those delightful walks, those gentle ascents, and soft declining slopes, which raise and sink the eye by turns to a thousand vegetable pleasures? How lovely are those sweet borders, and those growing varieties of bloom and fruit, which recall lost Paradise to mind! Those living parterres, which regale the sense with vital fragrancy, and make glad the sight, by their refreshing verdure and intermingled flowery beauties! The scythe of Time is passing over them all; they wither, they die away, they drop and vanish into dust; their duration is short; a few months deface all their yearly glories: and within a few years, perhaps, all these rising terrace-walks, these gentle verging declivities, shall lose all order and elegance, and become a rugged heap of ruins: those well-

distinguished borders and parterres shall be levelled in confusion, and thrown into common earth again, for the ox and the ass to graze upon them. Unhappy man, who possesses this agreeable spot of ground, if he has no paradise more durable than this !

And no wonder that these labours of the hands of men should perish, when even the works of God are perishable.

What are these visible heavens, these lower skies, and this globe of earth ? They are indeed the glorious workmanship of the Almighty ; but they are waxing old, and waiting their period too, when the angel shall pronounce upon them, "That time shall be no more. The heavens shall be folded up as a vesture, the elements of the lower world shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all the works thereof, shall be burnt up with fire." May the unruinable world be but my portion, and the heaven of heavens my inheritance, which is built for an eternal mansion for the sons of God : these buildings shall outlive time and nature, and exist through unknown ages of felicity !

What have we mortals to be proud of in our present state, when every human glory is so fugitive and fading ? Let the brightest and the best of us say to ourselves, "That we are but dust and vanity."

Is my body formed upon a graceful model ? Are my limbs well turned, and my complexion better coloured than my neighbours ? Beauty, even in perfection, is of the shortest date : a few years will inform me that its bloom vanishes, its flower withers, its lustre grows dim, its duration shall be no longer ; and if life be prolonged, yet the pride and glory of it is for ever lost in age and wrinkles ; or, perhaps, our vanity meets a speedier fate. Death and the grave, with a sovereign and irresistible

command, summons the brightest as well as the coarsest pieces of human nature to lie down early in their cold embraces ; and at last they must all mix together amongst worms and corruption. *Æsop* the deformed, *Helena* the fair, are lost and undistinguished in common earth. Nature, in its gayest bloom, is but a painted vanity.

Are my nerves well strung and vigorous ? Is my activity and strength far superior to my neighbours in the days of youth ? But youth hath its appointed limit : age steals upon it, unstrings the nerves, and makes the force of nature languish into infirmity and feebleness. *Samson* and *Goliath* would have lost their boasted advantages of stature and their brawny limbs in the course of half a century, though the one had escaped the sling of *David*, and the other the vengeance of his own hands in the ruin of *Dagon's* temple. Man, in his best estate, is a flying shadow and vanity.

Even those nobler powers of human life, which seem to have something angelical in them, I mean the powers of wit and fancy, gay imagination, and capacious memory, they are all subject to the same laws of decay and death. What though they can raise and animate beautiful scenes in a moment, and, in imitation of creating power, can spread bright appearances and new worlds before the senses and the souls of their friends ! What though they can entertain the better part of mankind, the refined and polite world, with high delight and rapture ! These scenes of rapturous delight grow flat and old by a frequent review, and the very powers that raised them grow feeble apace. What though they can give immortal applause and fame to their possessors ! It is but the immortality of an empty name, a mere succession of the breath of men ; and it is a short sort of immortality too, which must die and perish when this

world perishes. A poor shadow of duration indeed, while the real period of these powers is hastening every day; they languish and die as fast as animal nature, which has a large share in them, makes haste to its decay, and the time of their exercise shall shortly be no more.

In vain the aged poet and the painter would call up the muse and genius of their youth, and summon all the arts of their imagination to spread and dress out some visionary scene: in vain the elegant orator would recall the bold and masterly figures, and all those flowery images which gave ardour, grace, and dignity to his younger composures, and charmed every ear: they are gone, they are fled beyond the reach of their owner's call: their time is past, they are vanished and lost beyond all hope of recovery.

The God of nature has pronounced an impassable period upon all the powers, and pleasures, and glories of this mortal state. Let us then be afraid to make any of them our boast or our happiness; but point our affections to those diviner objects whose nature is everlasting; let us seek those religious attainments and those new-created powers of a sanctified mind, concerning which it shall never be pronounced, "that their time shall be no longer."

O may every one of us be humbly content, at the call of heaven, to part with all that is pleasing or magnificent here on earth; let us resign even these agreeable talents, when the God of nature demands; and when the hour arrives that shall close our eyes to all visible things, and lay our fleshy structure in the dust, let us yield up our whole selves to the hands of our Creator, who shall reserve our spirits with himself; and while we cheerfully give up all that was mortal to the grave, we may

lie down full of the joyful hope of a rising immortality. New and unknown powers and glories, brighter flames of imagination, richer scenes of wit and fancy, and diviner talents are preparing for us, when we shall awake from the dust; and the mind itself shall have all its faculties in a sublime state of improvement. These shall make us equal, if not superior, to angels, for we are nearer akin to the Son of God than they are, and therefore we shall be made more like him.

WATTS.

PRAISE WAITETH FOR THEE, O GOD, IN SION.

PSALM lxxv. 1.

AND does praise wait for God in the congregation of his saints? Surely it doth not use to be so. Mercy uses to be beforehand with us, and the Lord waiteth to be gracious. Mercy is wont to be ready in the hands of God before praise is ready on the tongues of men; and we are sure he waited on us to shew his grace long before we had any songs ready for him, or any thought of praising him.

Yet sometimes it is so in this lower world: holy souls may be waiting at the throne of grace with their praises ready to ascend as soon as mercy appears; mercy may be silent for a season, and then praise for a season is silent too. This is the original language of the psalm, and this the state of things when the psalmist wrote; "Praise is silent for thee in Sion." When the church of God under trouble has been long seeking any particular blessing or deliverance, and God's appointed hour of salvation is not yet come, then the songs of the church are silent; yet she stands watching and waiting for the

desired moment, that she may meet the salvation with praise.

But why should God suffer praise to be silent at all in Sion? Is not the church the habitation of his praises? Yes; but it is the house of prayer too; prayer and patience must have their proper exercise. If praise were never silent on earth, where would there be any room for prayer to speak? when would there be any season for the grace of patience to shew itself? God loves prayer as well as praise; his sovereignty is honoured by humble waiting, as well as his goodness by holy gratitude and joy. If praise be silent, then let prayer be more fervent. The absent Saviour loves to hear the voice of his beloved; the lips of the church must never be quite silent, though they are not always employed in hallelujahs.

Praise is the sweetest part of divine worship; it is a short heaven here on earth. God lets our praises be silent sometimes, to teach us that this is not a state of complete blessedness. After the great day of decision, praise shall be continual and unceasing, when there shall be no more sighing for the saints, no more death, no more pain. Then churches shall want ordinances no more; nor saints abstain from the bread of life. Jesus, their everlasting pastor, shall feed them in pastures ever green, and from the tree of life, and lead them to the fountains of joy, and the streams where eternal pleasures run. O may our souls wait with joyful hope for that day, and our praises shall not be silent.

Yet it is not with the church as it is with the world, when praise is silent in both. It is ever silent among the wicked; because they are forgetful of God, their Maker: it is only silent among the saints for a season,

when their God seems to frown and hide himself, and as it were to forget his people.

Besides, let us consider that all praise is not silent there. Daily incense arises before God in his temple, though particular thank-offerings wait till particular mercies are received. Praise for all the greatest mercies, namely, for redeeming grace, for electing love, for the sanctifying Spirit, is never silent in Zion. Psalm lxxxiv. 4: "Blessed are they that dwell in thine house; they will be still praising thee." But praise for some special favours may be silent for a season, as well as that large revenue of praise that shall grow due at the accomplishment of all the promises and the consummation of blessedness.

Again, the praises of God are silent in the world without any design of breaking forth; but the silence of the church longs to be lost in joyful songs of thanksgiving. It is like an engine charged with praise, that wants only the warm touch of mercy to make it shine with the glories of heavenly worship, and sound aloud the name of the God of heaven.

Sometimes God is as well pleased that praise should wait with humble silence, as that it should speak. It shews a well disposed frame and temper of soul that longs to honour God. The hearts of his saints are instruments of music to the Lord; he has formed their souls for his glory, and tuned their heartstrings to his own praise. Now he loves to see them keep still in tune, though he does not always play his own praises upon them; he neither wants our services nor our songs, for his own perfections are an everlasting harmony to himself, without the slender notes that we can sound.

We may make this sweet remark at last, that Zion on earth shall be joined to Jerusalem above; the family

below shall be joined to the upper house, for they have learned the work of heaven; their hearts are tuned to praise: they want only such harps as angels have to bring glory down, and make a heaven on this earth. In 1 Chron. xi. 4., we are told that David took Zion from the Jebuzites, and built it round about, and added it to Jerusalem. So shall Jesus, the true David, the king of saints, take this earthly Zion from the powers of this wicked world, and shall build and adorn it around with glory and strength, with perfect beauty and complete grace, and add it to the Jerusalem which is above. Look upward, O souls who are full of praises, and are even impatient to speak the glories of your God! look to Jerusalem above, where praise is constant and never-ceasing, and rejoice to think that you shall be made inhabitants of that city, and united to the glorious church. It is your chief pleasure here to be praising your God; and it is the chief pleasure of your fellow-saints on high, where happiness is perfect, praise is perfect too, and never silent.

It is the chief delight of happy souls there to run over the glories of their God, and tell one another joyfully, and humbly tell their God, what a wise, what a holy, what an almighty, and all-gracious God he is. Every breath of praise is a new gale of pleasure there; it is sweet breathing, in air perfumed with praises; and this climate is most agreeable to your new nature and your constitution, you that are members and parts of Zion; and you shall be translated thither to your kindred souls. In heaven the river of pleasure springs from God's right hand, because Jesus, the Saviour, sits there. It is a river that makes glad the city of God; and every stream, as it flows along the golden streets, murmurs sweet praises to the fountain.

But heaven and the state of glory are not yet complete: the church waits above for many promises that are not yet fulfilled, and future blessings that are yet unknown. The work of grace is not finished till the great resurrection day; and heaven itself, in all the blissful regions of it, waits for such praises as the ear of men or angels has never yet heard.

While the whole church of God on earth is in a state of imperfection and trial, a state of sins and sorrows, praise waits in all the sanctuaries below, and in Zion above too. The souls in glory wait for complete salvation, and the redemption of their bodies from the grave. On the harps of angels praise sits waiting; and it waits also on the tongue of Jesus, the intercessor. His prayers shall one day change all at once into praises, and lift the praises of angels, and embodied saints, to higher notes than ever yet they knew. O the voices and the songs, the joys, the raptures of that moment, of that day, of that eternity, when such a multitude of praises shall burst out at once, that have been waiting long in that Zion, and shall become an everlasting praise! when Jesus, the Son of God, the Mediator, shall lead the worship, and the praises that have been growing these seventeen hundred years on his tongue shall break forth and spread themselves abroad, and all the creation shall hear, and all echo to his song, Glory to God in the highest! This is what we wait and hope for, and long to bear a part in those pleasures and those praises.

WATTS.

REFLECTIONS SUGGESTED IN SILENT WOR-
SHIP—"THOUGHTS OF THE WORLD."

THOUGHTS of the World, away ! nor dare molest
The sacred calm now settling on my breast.
Thoughts of the World—and what that world contains,
Seducing pleasures, ending still in pains,
You now I offer on that purer shrine
Where thus to wait, to pray, to weep is mine.
O may no image, tho' most dear it be,
Presume to steal between my God and me ;
May he in silence holy thought inspire,
And my soul's enemy subdu'd retire,
Till, heaven-assisted, through each mental strife,
I drink the waters of the well of life,
And feel their vivifying power impart
Strength to my soul, and comfort to my heart.
Thoughts of the World—O must you come again,
To bind my wearied soul in Satan's chain ?
Again to dash salvation's cup from me,
And fetter her, the Saviour now sets free :
Alas ! too soon your influence may return,
And faith's now lambent radiance dimly burn ;
No more my heart may feel the holy rest,
Like halcyon's wings on ocean's troubl'd breast,
Which smooths the waves of passion at its will,
And to the voice of sin cries " Peace, be still."
Thoughts of the World—How shall I then control,
Amidst that world, your influence on my soul ?
Say, when I leave this consecrated scene,
Where now so safe, so wrapt, so bless'd I've been,
How shall I seek, and where obtain the pow'r,
To guard my threaten'd breast in danger's hour ?

Spirit of prayer ! In-dwelling Spirit, thou,
 And thou alone this Ægis canst bestow ;
 Shielded by thee, when worldly thoughts intrude,
 Still shall I keep my soul's pure solitude ;
 Still drive the baneful visitants away,
 Still bid rebellious sin withhold its sway,
 Till my whole heart to its Redeemer given,
 Thoughts of the World shall yield to hopes of heaven.

AMELIA OPIE.

ON DIVINE WORSHIP.

THOUGH worship, or devotion, is the most solemn, the most awful, and the most sublime exercise in which the mind of man can be engaged, yet, in itself, it is simple. How awful it must be, for frail and erring creatures to present themselves to the notice of that Omniscient Being, before whom the secrets of all hearts are unveiled ! Well might the prophet, under a sense of the Divine Majesty, exclaim ; “ Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God ! Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old ? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ? ”—Micah vi. 6, 7.

And yet how animating ! What an unspeakable favour it is, for the soul to be permitted to approach the Throne of Grace, and pour forth its wants, its sorrows, and desires, before a Heavenly Father ; feeling that his own Divine Influence gives access to Him, and forms the language of the prayer, the humble acknowledgment, or triumphant praise ! And yet this solemn and sublime exercise is simple. It requires neither wealth, nor

learning, nor extraordinary natural abilities, to perform it. It is within the reach of the simple, the illiterate, and the poor. It can be performed in solitude, as well as in the crowd.—The splendour of temples, and the pomp of attendance, can add nothing to recommend it to the notice of Almighty God.

There is not a duty we owe, or a privilege we enjoy, more necessary or more simple than Divine worship. But as the act itself can neither be performed nor comprehended, without the quickening, illuminating Influence of the Spirit of Christ; so there is no religious duty, in which the wisdom of man has been more busy, or made greater innovations.

BATES.

JEHOVAH SHAMMAH.

EZEKIEL xlviii. 35.

THOU art our Father, Lord, our Lord;
And thou shalt every word fulfil
Of promised love, and Zion-ward
Shalt lead the tribes in Judah still.

Though mute within thy courts we stand,
Nor harp, nor tabret's sound is there,
Nor bended knee, nor lifted hand,
Nor solemn vow, nor voice of prayer.

The heart contrite, the lowly mind,
The strength implored, the trembling plea,
The darling joy of years resigned,
In grateful incense rise to thee.

Sometimes, perhaps, as left and weak,
 Along her walls may Zion mourn,
 Because they be but few that seek
 Her day of feast or solemn morn.

But thou shalt still inhabit there,
 And there shall still thy glory shine ;
 And Shiloh's fount thy name shall bear,
 And Zion's hill shall yet be thine.

Yet shalt thou teach her sons thy ways,
 Her courts with prophets yet shall fill ?
 And on her gates shall still be praise,
 And on her walls salvation still.

There shalt thou bid thine ensign stand,
 And blow thy trumpet, that from far
 Shall call the nations, land by land ;
 And they shall answer, here we are.

And Cush and Elam as of old,
 And Ocean's Isles shall come to her
 With richest offerings, gems and gold,
 And balm, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Around her border shalt thou lead
 The streams that gladden where they flow ;
 And there Nabaioth's rams shall feed,
 And there the flocks of Kedar go.

Within, thy love, thy peace shall rest,
 The unmeasured spirit all shall bear ;
 And every tongue shall call her Blessed,
 And name her name, " The Lord is there."

TESTIMONIES OF THE HEATHEN TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

PYTHAGORAS calls this Divine Principle, the "Great Light and Salt of ages." Anaxagoras called it "the Divine Mind." Socrates called it "a good Spirit." Timeus styled it an Unbegotten Principle, and Author of all Light." Hieron, Pythagoras, Epictetus, and Seneca, say it is "God in Man, or God within." Plato calls it the "Eternal, Ineffable and Perfect Principle of Truth; the Light and Spirit of God." Plotin calls it, "the Root of the Soul; the Divine Principle in man." Philo, "the Divine Power—the Infallible, Immortal Law, in the minds of men." And Plutarch denominates it, "the Law and the Living Rule of the mind, the interior Guide of the soul, and Everlasting Foundation of virtue."

Of the operation of this Divine Principle in the mind, Plato gives this striking testimony: "The Light and Spirit of God are as wings to the soul, or as that which raises up the soul into a sensible communion with God, above the world, which the mind of man is prone to slug or bemire itself withal." Cleanthes, a stoic philosopher, considered that men should be governed "by that Divine, Infinite, and Eternal Nature, which is God, universally diffused or sown through the whole race of man, as the most sure and infallible Guide and Rule." "To live," said he, "according to this knowledge and direction, is strictly to live according to virtue; not doing any thing that is forbidden. The virtue and happiness of man depend upon the close correspondence of his mind with the divine will of Him who governeth

the universe." "The knowledge of God is imprinted on the minds of men."

The testimony of Plutarch deserves to be transmitted to posterity: "It is a law, not written in tables or books, but dwelling in the mind always, as a living rule, which never permits the soul to be destitute of an *interior* Guide." "To debase this ancient faith of mankind, and natural belief, which is planted in all reasonable souls, is to overthrow the strong and everlasting foundation of virtue."

And Seneca bore this noble testimony, among many others, to this principle; "that virtue has sent her light before into the *minds of all*; for even they that *follow her not, see her*." BATES.

THE RAINBOW.

THE evening was glorious, and light through the trees,
Play'd the sun-shine and rain drops, the birds and the
breeze;

The landscape, outstretching in loveliness, lay
On the lap of the year, in the beauty of May.

For the Queen of the Spring, as she pass'd down the vale,
Left her robe on the trees, and her breath on the gale;
And the smile of her promise gave joy to the hours,
And flush in her footsteps sprang herbage and flowers.

The skies, like a banner in sunset unroll'd,
O'er the west threw their splendour of azure and gold;
But one cloud at a distance rose dense, and increas'd,
Till its margin of black touch'd the zenith, and east.

We gaz'd on the scenes, while around us they glowed,
 When a vision of beauty appear'd on the cloud;—
 'Twas not like the sun, as at mid-day we view,
 Nor the moon, that rolls nightly through star-light and
 blue.

Like a spirit, it came in the van of a storm!
 And the eye, and the heart, hail'd its beautiful form;
 For it look'd not severe, like an angel of wrath,
 But a garment of brightness illum'd its dark path.

Sublime in the hues of its grandeur it stood,
 O'er the river, the village, the field, and the wood;
 And river, field, village, and woodlands grew bright,
 As conscious they gave and afforded delight.

'Twas the bow of Omnipotence, bent in his hand,
 Whose grasp at creation the universe spann'd;
 'Twas the presence of God, in a symbol sublime;
 His vow from the flood to the exit of time!

Not dreadful, as when in the whirlwind he pleads,
 When storms are his chariot, and lightnings his steeds;
 The black clouds his banner of vengeance unfurl'd,
 And thunder his voice to a guilt-stricken world;—

In the breath of his presence, when thousands expire,
 And seas boil with fury, and rocks burn with fire,
 And the sword and the plague-spot with death strew the
 plain,
 And vultures and wolves are the graves of the slain;—

Not such was that rainbow, that beautiful one!
 Whose arch was refraction, its key-stone—the sun;

A pavilion it seem'd which the Deity grac'd,
And Justice and Mercy met there, and embrac'd.

Awhile, and it sweetly bent over the gloom,
Like Love o'er a death-couch, or Hope o'er the tomb;
Then left the dark scene, whence it slowly retir'd,
As Love had just vanish'd, or Hope had expir'd.

I gaz'd not alone on that source of my song;—
To all who beheld it these verses belong;
Its presence to all was the path of the Lord!
Each full heart expanded—grew warm—and adored!

Like a visit—the converse of friends—or a day,
That bow, from my sight, pass'd for ever away;
Like that visit, that converse, that day—to my heart,
That bow from remembrance can never depart.

'Tis a picture in memory distinctly defin'd,
With the strong and unperishing colours of mind;
A part of my being, beyond my controul,
Beheld on that cloud, and transcrib'd on my soul.

J. HOLLAND.

ON THE VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE.

1. THE aspect of the world, even without any of the peculiar lights which science throws upon it, is fitted to give us an idea of the greatness of the power by which it is directed and governed, far exceeding any notions of power and greatness which are suggested by any other contemplation. The number of human beings who surround us—the various conditions requisite for their

life, nutrition, well-being, all fulfilled;—the way in which these conditions are modified, as we pass in thought to other countries, by climate, temperament, habit;—the vast amount of the human population of the globe thus made up;—yet man himself but one among almost endless tribes of animals;—the forest, the field, the desert, the air, the ocean, all teeming with creatures whose bodily wants are as carefully provided for as his;—the sun, the clouds, the winds, all attending, as it were, on these organized beings;—a host of beneficent energies, unwearied by time and succession, pervading every corner of the earth; this spectacle cannot but give the contemplator a lofty and magnificent conception of the Author of so vast a work, of the Ruler of so wide and rich an empire, of the Provider for so many and varied wants, the Director and Adjuster of such complex and jarring interests.

But when we take a more exact view of this spectacle, and aid our vision by the discoveries which have been made of the structure and extent of the universe, the impression is incalculably increased.

The number and variety of animals, the exquisite skill displayed in their structure, the comprehensive and profound relations by which they are connected, far exceed any thing which we could have beforehand imagined. But the view of the universe expands also on another side. The earth, the globular body thus covered with life, is not the only globe in the universe. There are, circling about our own sun, six others, so far as we can judge, perfectly analogous in their nature: besides our moon and other bodies analogous to it. No one can resist the temptation to conjecture, that these globes, some of them much larger than our own, are not dead and barren;—that they are, like ours, occupied

with organization, life, intelligence. To conjecture is all that we can do, yet even by the perception of such a possibility, our view of the domain of nature is enlarged and elevated. The outermost of the planetary globes of which we have spoken is so far from the sun, that the central luminary must appear to the inhabitants of that planet, if any there are, no larger than Venus does to us; and the length of their year will be 82 of ours.

But astronomy carries us still onwards. It teaches us that, with the exception of the planets already mentioned, the stars which we see have no immediate relation to our system. The obvious supposition is that they are of the nature and order of our sun: the minuteness of their apparent magnitude agrees, on this supposition, with the enormous and almost inconceivable distance which, from all the measurements of astronomers, we are led to attribute to them. If then these are suns, they may, like our sun, have planets revolving round them; and these may, like our planet, be the seats of vegetable and animal and rational life:—we may thus have in the universe worlds, no one knows how many, no one can guess how varied;—but however many, however varied, they are still but so many provinces in the same empire, subject to common rules, governed by a common power.

But the stars which we see with the naked eye are but a very small portion of those which the telescope unveils to us. The most imperfect telescope will discover some that are invisible without it; the very best instrument perhaps does not show us the most remote. The number of stars which crowd some parts of the heavens is truly marvellous: Dr. Herschel calculated that a portion of the milky way, about 10 degrees long

and $2\frac{1}{2}$ broad, contained 258,000. In a sky so occupied, the moon would eclipse 2000 of such stars at once.

We learn too from the telescope that even in this province the variety of nature is not exhausted. Not only do the stars differ in colour and appearance, but some of them grow periodically fainter and brighter, as if they were dark on one side, and revolved on their axes. In other cases two stars appear close to each other, and in some of these cases it has been clearly established, that the two have a motion of revolution about each other; thus exhibiting an arrangement new to the astronomer, and giving rise, possibly, to new conditions of worlds. In other instances again, the telescope shows, not luminous points, but extended masses of dilute light, like bright clouds, hence called *nebulae*. Some have supposed that such *nebulae* by further condensation might become suns; but for such opinions we have nothing but conjecture. Some stars again have undergone permanent changes; or have absolutely disappeared, as the celebrated star of 1572, in the constellation Cassiopea.

If we take the whole range of created objects in our own system, from the sun down to the smallest animalcule, and suppose such a system, or something in some way analogous to it, to be repeated for each of the millions of stars which the telescope reveals to us, we obtain a representation of the material universe; at least a representation which to many persons appears the most probable one. And if we contemplate this aggregate of systems as the work of a Creator, which in our own system we have found ourselves so irresistibly led to do, we obtain a sort of estimate of the extent through which his creative energy may be traced, by taking the widest view of the universe which our faculties have attained.

If we consider further the endless and admirable contrivances and adaptations which philosophers and observers have discovered in every portion of our own system ; every new step of our knowledge showing us something new in this respect ; and if we combine this consideration with the thought how small a portion of the universe our knowledge includes, we shall, without being able at all to discern the extent of the skill and wisdom displayed in the creation, see something of the character of the design, and of the copiousness and ampleness of the means which the scheme of the world exhibits. And when we see that the tendency of all the arrangements which we can comprehend is to support the existence, to develop the faculties, to promote the well-being of these countless species of creatures ; we shall have some impression of the beneficence and love of the Creator, as manifested in the physical government of his creation.

2. It is extremely difficult to devise any means of bringing before a common apprehension the scale on which the universe is constructed, the enormous proportion which the larger dimensions bear to the smaller, and the amazing number of steps from large to smaller, or from small to larger, which the consideration of it offers. The following comparative representations may serve to give the reader to whom the subject is new some idea of these steps.

If we suppose the earth to be represented by a globe a foot in diameter, the distance of the sun from the earth will be about two miles ; the diameter of the sun, on the same supposition, will be something above one hundred feet, and consequently his bulk such as might be made up of two hemispheres, each about the size of the dome of St. Paul's. The moon will be thirty feet from us, and her diameter three inches, about that of a

cricket ball. Thus the sun would much more than occupy all the space within the moon's orbit. On the same scale, Jupiter would be above ten miles from the sun, and Uranus forty. We see then how thinly scattered through space are the heavenly bodies. The fixed stars would be at an unknown distance, but, probably, if all distances were thus diminished, no star would be nearer to such a one-foot earth, than the moon now is to us.

On such a terrestrial globe the highest mountains would be about 1-80th of an inch high, and consequently only just distinguishable. We may imagine therefore how imperceptible would be the largest animals. The whole organized covering of such an earth would be quite undiscoverable by the eye, except perhaps by colour, like the bloom on a plum.

In order to restore the earth and its inhabitants to their true dimensions, we must magnify the length, breadth, and thickness of every part of our supposed models forty millions of times; and to preserve the proportions, we must increase equally the distances of the sun and of the stars from us. They seem thus to pass off into infinity; yet each of them thus removed, has its system of mechanical and perhaps of organic processes going on upon its surface.

But the arrangements of organic life which we can see with the naked eye are few, compared with those which the microscope detects. We know that we may magnify objects thousands of times, and still discover fresh complexities of structure; if we suppose, therefore, that we thus magnify every member of the universe and every particle of matter of which it consists; we may imagine that we make perceptible to our senses the vast multitude of organized adaptations which lie hid on every

side of us; and in this manner we approach towards an estimate of the extent through which we may trace the power and skill of the Creator, by scrutinizing his work with the utmost subtlety of our faculties.

3. The other numerical quantities which we have to consider in the phenomena of the universe are on as gigantic a scale as the distances and sizes. By the rotation of the earth on its axis, the parts of the equator move at the rate of a thousand miles an hour, and the portions of the earth's surface which are in our latitude, at about six hundred. The former velocity is nearly that with which a cannon ball is discharged from the mouth of a gun; but, large as it is, it is inconsiderable compared with the velocity of the earth in its orbit about the sun. This latter velocity is sixty-five times the former. By the rotatory motion of the earth, a point of its surface is carried sometimes forward and sometimes backwards with regard to the annual progression; but in consequence of the great predominance of the annual motion in amount, the diurnal scarcely affects it either way in any appreciable degree. And even the velocity of the earth in her orbit is inconsiderable compared with that of light; which comparison, however, we shall not make; since, according to the theory we have considered as most probable, the motion of light is not a transfer of matter but of motion from one part of space to another.

The extent of the scale of density of different substances has already been mentioned; gold is twenty times as heavy as water; air is eight hundred and thirty times lighter, steam eight thousand times lighter than water; the luminiferous ether is incomparably rarer than steam: and this is true of the matter of light, whether we adapt the undulatory theory or any other.

4. The above estimates are vast in amount, and almost oppressive to our faculties. They belong to the measurement of the powers which are exerted in the universe, and of the spaces through which their efficacy reaches (for the most distant bodies are probably connected both by gravity and light). But these estimates cannot be said so much to give us any notion of the powers of the Deity, as to correct the errors we should fall into by supposing his powers to have any limits like those which belong to our faculties:—by supposing that numbers, and spaces, and forces, and combinations, which would overwhelm us, are any obstacle to the arrangements which his plan requires. We can easily understand that to an intelligence surpassing ours in degree only, that may be easy which is impossible to us. The child who cannot count beyond four, the savage who has no name for any number above five, cannot comprehend the possibility of dealing with thousands and millions: yet a little additional developement of the intellect makes such numbers conceivable and manageable. The difficulty which appears to reside in numbers and magnitudes and stages of subordination, is one produced by judging from ourselves—by measuring with our own sounding line; when that reaches no bottom, the ocean appears unfathomable. Yet in fact, how is a hundred millions of miles a *great* distance? how is a hundred millions of times a *great* ratio? Not in itself; this *greatness* is no quality of the numbers which can be proved like their mathematical properties; on the contrary, all that absolutely belongs to number, space, and ratio, must, we know demonstrably, be equally true of the largest and the smallest. It is clear that the *greatness* of these expressions of measure has reference to *our* faculties only. Our astonishment and embarrassment

take for granted the limits of our own nature. We have a tendency to treat a difference of degree and of addition, as if it were a difference of kind and of transformation. The existence of the attributes, design, power, goodness, is a matter depending on obvious grounds; about these qualities there can be no mistake: if we can know anything, we can know these attributes when we see them. But the extent, the limits of such attributes must be determined by their effects; our knowledge of their limits by what we see of the effects. Nor is any extent, any amount of power and goodness improbable before hand: we know that these must be great, we cannot tell how great. We should not expect beforehand to find them bounded; and therefore when the boundless prospect opens before us, we may be bewildered, but we have no reason to be shaken in our conviction of the reality of the cause from which their effects proceed: we may feel ourselves incapable of following the train of thought, and may stop, but we have no rational motive for quitting the point which we have thus attained in tracing the Divine Perfections.

On the contrary, those magnitudes and proportions which leave our powers of conception far behind:—that ever-expanding view which is brought before us, of the scale and mechanism, the riches and magnificence, the population and activity of the universe;—may reasonably serve, not to disturb, but to enlarge and elevate our conceptions of the Maker and Master of all; to feed an ever-growing admiration of His wonderful nature; and to excite a desire to be able to contemplate more steadily and conceive less inadequately the scheme of His government and the operation of His power.

WHEWELL.

OMNIPOTENCE.

(ISAIAH xl. PSALM civ. &c.)

How mighty is our Father,
 Whose throne is in the heaven !
 Whose footstool is this spacious earth,
 That sprang immediately to birth
 When his command was given.

He measured out the waters
 In hollow of his hand,
 And, as he spread the curtained sky
 Around the rolling orbs on high,
 The wide creation spanned.

He weighed upon a balance
 The everlasting hills,
 And portioned out the primal clay
 That now, in forms of various ray,
 The scene of being fills.

He sits upon the circle
 Of the revolving earth ;
 And, as the human tumult stirs,
 The people are like grasshoppers
 That cherup in their mirth.

He touches but the mountains,
 And they with terror smoke ;
 He frowns—the earth's foundations shake ;
 He smiles—and gushing waters break
 Profusely from the rock.

He clothes him with the sun-light,
 And every tongue is praise ;
 He wraps him in the thunder-cloud,
 And drives with ruin o'er the proud,
 And all the works they raise.

He rides upon the whirlwind,
 He walks upon the waves,—
 His ministers are flaming fire,
 That chase, in his consuming ire,
 The impious to their graves.

He is the same for ever
 To those that on him trust ;
 While men and all their boasted hopes
 Are scattered like the water-drops—
 Like particles of dust.

At last he will extinguish
 The brilliant orb of day—
 The heavens with all their stars shall roll
 Together like a burning scroll,
 And earth dissolve away.

Oh ! then, Eternal Father !
 Stretch forth thy mighty hand,
 And from the overwhelming flame
 That wracks the scorners of thy name,
 Oh ! snatch us like a brand !

Knox.

THE DIVINE MISSION OF JESUS VERIFIED BY THREE MOST SINGULAR AND INCON- TESTABLE FACTS.

THE truth of Christianity depends upon its leading facts, and upon them alone. Now of these we have evidence which ought to satisfy us, at least until it appear that mankind have ever been deceived by the same. We have some uncontested and incontestable points to which the history of the human species has nothing similar to offer. A Jewish peasant changed the religion of the world, and that without force, without power, without support, without one natural source or circumstance of attraction, influence, or success. Such a thing hath not happened in any other instance. The companions of this person, after he himself had been put to death for this attempt, asserted his supernatural character, founded upon his supernatural opinions; and in testimony of the truth of their assertions, that is, in consequence of their own belief of that truth, and in order to communicate the knowledge of it to others, voluntarily entered upon toils and hardships, and, with a full experience of their danger, committed themselves to the last extremity of persecution. This hath not a parallel.—More particularly, a few days after this person had been publicly executed, and in the very city in which he was buried, these his companions declared with one voice, that his body was restored to life; that they had seen him, handled him, eat with him, conversed with him; and in pursuance of their persuasion of the truth of what they told, preached his religion, with this strange fact as the foundation of it, in the face of those who had killed him, who were armed with the power of the country, and necessarily and naturally disposed to

treat his followers as they had treated himself; and having done this upon the spot where the event took place, carried the intelligence of it abroad, in despite of difficulties and opposition, and where the nature of their errand gave them nothing to expect but derision, insult, and outrage. This is without example. These three facts I think are certain, and would have been nearly so, if the Gospels had never been written. The Christian story as to these points have never varied. No other hath been set up against it. Every letter, every discourse, every controversy, amongst the followers of the religion; every book written by them, from the age of its commencement to the present time, in every part of the world in which it hath been professed, and with every sect into which it hath been divided (and we have letters and discourses written by contemporaries, by witnesses of the transactions, by persons themselves bearing a share in it, and other writings following that age in regular succession) *concur* in representing these facts in this manner. A religion, which now possesses the greatest part of the civilized world, unquestionably sprung up at Jerusalem at this time. Some account must be given of its origin; some cause assigned for its rise. All the accounts of this origin, all the explications of this cause, whether taken from the writings of the early followers of the religion (in which, and in which perhaps alone, it could be expected that they should be distinctly unfolded), or from occasional notices in other writings of that or the adjoining age, either expressly allege the facts above stated as the means by which the religion was set up, or advert to its commencement in a manner which agrees with the supposition of these facts being true, and which testifies their operations and effects.

These propositions alone lay a foundation for our

faith; for they prove the existence of a transaction, which cannot even in its most *general* parts be accounted for, upon any reasonable supposition, except that of the truth of the mission. But the particulars of the *detail* of the miracles or miraculous pretences (for such there necessarily must have been), upon which this unexampl'd transaction rested, and *for* which these men acted and suffered as they did act and suffer, it is undoubtedly of great importance to us to know. We *have* this detail from the fountain head, from the persons themselves; in accounts written by eye witnesses of the scene, by contemporaries and companions of those who were so; not in one book, but four, each containing enough for the verification of the religion, all agreeing in the fundamental parts of the history. We have the authenticity of these books established by more and stronger proofs than belong to almost any other ancient book whatever, and by proofs which widely distinguish them from any others claiming a similar authority to theirs. If there were any good reason for doubt concerning the names to which these books are ascribed (which there is not, for they were never ascribed to any other, and we have evidence, not long after their publication, of their bearing the names which they now bear), their antiquity, of which there is no question, their reputation and authority amongst the early disciples of the religion, of which there is as little, form a valid proof that they must, in the main at least, have agreed with what the first teachers of the religion delivered.

When we open these ancient volumes, we discover in them marks of truth, whether we consider each in itself, or collate them with one another. The writers certainly knew something of what they were writing about, for they manifest an acquaintance with local circumstances,

with the history and usages of the times, which could only belong to an inhabitant of that country, living in that age. In every narrative we perceive simplicity and undesignedness; the air and the language of reality. When we compare the different narratives together, we find them so varying, as to repel all suspicion of confederacy; so agreeing under this variety, as to show that the accounts had one real transaction for their common foundation; often attributing different actions and discourses to the person whose history, or rather memoirs of whose history, they profess to relate, yet actions and discourses so similar, as very much to bespeak the same character; which is a coincidence, that, in such writers as they were, could only be the consequence of their writing from fact, and not from imagination.

These four narratives are confined to the history of the founder of the religion, and end with his ministry. Since, however, it is certain that the affair went on, we cannot help being anxious to know *how* it proceeded. This intelligence hath come down to us in a work purporting to be written by a person himself connected with the business during the first stages of its progress, taking up the story where the former historian had left it, carrying on the narrative oftentimes with great particularity, and throughout with the appearance of good sense,* information, and candour, stating all along the origin, and the only probable origin of effects, which

* See Peter's speech upon curing the cripple (Acts xiii. 18); the council of the Apostles (xv.); Paul's discourse at Athens (xvii. 22); before Agrippa (xxvi.) I notice these passages both as fraught with good sense, and as free from the smallest tincture of enthusiasm.

unquestionably were produced, together with the natural consequences of situations, which unquestionably did exist; and *confirmed*, in the substance at least of the account, by the strongest possible accession of testimony which a history can receive, *original letters*, written by the person who is the principal subject of the history, written upon the business to which the history relates, and during the period, or soon after the period, which the history comprises. No man can say that this altogether is not a body of strong historical evidence.

PALEY.

UBIQUITY.

(PSALM cxxxix. 7, 8, 9, and 10.)

THERE is a Spirit in the wilderness,
 Though all the winds be sleeping, and the brooks
 Elapsing down their shores
 As quietly as dreams—
 Though all the breathing creatures of the earth
 Have stilled their voices, and the only sound
 That strikes thy listening ear
 Be from thy beating heart.

Who sends the sun of morn, the dew of eve,
 And all those heavenly visitants that bring
 Glad tidings to the scenes
 Which man hath never trod?
 Who bids the moss with living greenness clothe
 The naked rocks, that happiness may flow
 Down to the grasshopper,
 And creatures more minute?

Who—hadst thou wing of angel to approach
 The limits of creation, to pursue
 Thy journey through the vale
 Of darkness and of death,
 To visit heavens beyond the flight of thought—
 Who, with an universal presence, still
 Would never once be found
 A moment from thy side?

Go ask thy heart these questions—when the moon
 Shines on the breathless midnight, and the eyes
 Of human things are closed
 In temporary death—
 Go ask thy heart—What Spirit thus abides
 In every region? thus minutely works
 In deserts? And thy heart
 Shall answer—"It is God!"

KNOX.

THE FLOOD.

(GENESIS vii.)

THE Lord beheld from highest heaven,
 That all the earth had gone astray,
 And, grieved that breath had e'er been given
 To such corrupted things of clay :
 He bade the foaming ocean rush
 In fury from its ancient place—
 He bade heaven's opened windows gush
 Their waters o'er the earth's fair face :
 For God had said that all should die
 But Noah and his family.

Ah! who the people's dread may tell,
 When, wakening from their guilty dream,
 They saw within their native dell
 The rolling and the rising stream,—
 They saw the floating ark afar
 Along the billowy waters driven,
 Even swiftly as a glittering star
 Behind the hurrying clouds of heaven?
 Merciful God! how would they cry
 Upon thy name in agony!

And they would to the mountains speed,
 While fast behind the waters rise—
 The aged with the hoary head,
 The youthful with the sparkling eyes,
 The mother with her babe at breast,
 The father with his tottering child,
 All with one common fear impressed,
 All with one common terror wild—
 All shrinking from the scenes that lie
 Before them in eternity.

And now, on every mountain-top,
 A crowd of trembling mortals stands;
 And, though bereft of every hope,
 All raising the imploring hands,
 All lifting the beseeching voice,
 As nearer still the waters come;
 Save when the wave's appalling noise
 Hath struck the frenzied tremblers dumb,
 In that dark state of blank dismay
 That knows not what to do or say.

And o'er them now the waters rise—

O God! the rush, the shriek, the prayer!

And now all breathing nature dies

In one loud yell of wild despair!

Save those that of the watery world

May now enjoy a human home—

Save those that yet, with wing unfurled,

Skim feebly o'er their graves of foam—

Save those that sail securely by

With Noah and his family.

KNOX.

REFLECTIONS.—ON PRAYER.

IF there be any duty which our Lord Jesus Christ seems to have considered as more indispensably necessary towards the formation of a true Christian, it is that of prayer. He has taken every opportunity of impressing on our minds the absolute need in which we stand of the divine assistance, both to persist in the paths of righteousness, and to fly from the allurements of a fascinating but dangerous life; and he has directed us to the only means of obtaining that assistance, in constant and habitual appeals to the throne of grace. Prayer is certainly the foundation-stone of the superstructure of a religious life: for a man can neither arrive at true piety, nor persevere in its ways when attained, unless with sincere and continued fervency, and with the most unaffected anxiety, he implore Almighty God to grant him his perpetual grace, to guard and restrain him from all those derelictions of heart, to which we are, by nature, but too prone. I should think it an insult to the understanding of a Christian to dwell on the necessity of

prayer; and, before we can harangue an infidel on its efficacy, we must convince him not only that the Being to whom we address ourselves really exists, but that he condescends to hear and to answer our humble supplications. As these objects are foreign to my present purpose, I shall take my leave of the necessity of prayer, as acknowledged by all to whom this paper is addressed, and shall be content to expatiate on the strong inducements which we have to lift up our souls to our Maker in the language of supplication and praise; to depict the happiness which results to the man of true piety from the exercise of this duty; and lastly, to warn mankind, lest their fervency would carry them into the extreme of fanaticism, and their prayers, instead of being silent and unassuming expressions of gratitude to their Maker, and humble entreaties for his favouring grace, should degenerate into clamorous vociferations, and insolent gesticulations, utterly repugnant to the true spirit of prayer, and to the language of a creature addressing his Creator.

There is such an exalted delight to a regenerate being in the act of prayer, and he anticipates with so much pleasure, amid the toils of business, and the crowds of the world, the moment when he shall be able to pour out his soul without interruption into the bosom of his Maker, that I am persuaded, that the degree of desire or repugnance which a man feels to the performance of this amiable duty, is an infallible criterion of his acceptance with God. Let the unhappy child of dissipation—let the impure voluptuary boast of his short hours of exquisite enjoyment; even in the degree of bliss they are infinitely inferior to the delight of which the righteous man participates in his private devotions; while in their opposite consequences they lead to a no less wide

extreme than heaven and hell, a state of positive happiness, and a state of positive misery. If there were no other inducement to prayer, than the very gratification it imparts to the soul, it would deserve to be regarded as the most important object of a Christian; for no where else could he purchase so much calmness, so much resignation, and so much of that peace and repose of spirit, in which consists the chief happiness of this otherwise dark and stormy being. But to prayer, besides the inducement of momentary gratification, the very self-love implanted in our bosoms would lead us to resort, as the chief good; for our Lord has said, "Ask, and it shall be given to thee; knock, and it shall be opened;" and not a supplication made in the true spirit of faith and humility, but shall be answered; not a request which is urged with unfeigned submission and lowliness of spirit, but shall be granted, if it be consistent with our happiness, either temporal or eternal. Of this happiness, however, the Lord God is the only judge; but this we do know, that whether our requests be granted, or whether they be refused, all is working together for our ultimate benefit.

When I say, that such of our requests and solicitations as are urged in the true spirit of meekness, humility, and submission, will indubitably be answered, I would wish to draw a line between supplications so urged, and those violent and vehement declamations which, under the name of prayers, are sometimes heard to proceed from the lips of men professing to worship God in the spirit of meekness and truth. Surely I need not impress on any reasonable mind, how directly contrary these inflamed and bombastic harangues are to every precept of Christianity, and every idea of the deference due from a poor worm, like man, to the omnipotent and all-great

God. Can we hesitate a moment as to which is more acceptable in his sight—the diffident, the lowly, the retiring, and yet solemn and impressive form of worship of our excellent church; and the wild and laboured exclamations, the authoritative and dictatory clamours of men, who, forgetting the immense distance at which they stand from the awful Being whom they address, boldly and with unblushing front, speak to their God as to an equal, and almost dare to prescribe to his infinite wisdom the steps it shall pursue? How often has the silent, yet eloquent eye of mercy, rung from the reluctant hand of charity that relief which has been denied to the loud and importunate beggar? And is heaven to be taken by storm? Are we to wrest the Almighty from his purposes by vociferation and importunity? God forbid! It is a fair and reasonable, though a melancholy inference, that the Lord shuts his ears against prayers like these, and leaves the deluded supplicants to follow the impulse of their own headstrong passions, without a guide, and destitute of every ray of his pure and holy light.

Those mock apostles, who thus disgrace the worship of the true God by their extravagance, are very fond of appearing to imitate the conduct of our Saviour, during his mortal peregrination; but how contrary were his habits to those of these deluded men! Did he teach his disciples to insult the ear of heaven with noise and clamour? Were his precepts those of fanaticism and passion? Did he inflame the minds of his hearers with vehement and declamatory harangues? Did he pray with all this confidence—this arrogance—this assurance? How different was his conduct! He divested wisdom of all its pomp and parade, in order to suit it to the capacities of the meanest of its auditors. He spake to them

in the lowly language of parable and similitude; and when he prayed, did he instruct his hearers to attend to him with a loud chorus of Amens? Did he (participating as he did in the Godhead), did he assume the tone of sufficiency, and the language of assurance? Far from it! he prayed, and he instructed his disciples to pray, in lowliness and meekness of spirit; he instructed them to approach the throne of Grace with fear and trembling, silently, and with the deepest awe and veneration; and he evinced by his condemnation of the prayer of the self-sufficient Pharisee, opposed to that of the diffident publican, the light in which those were considered in the eyes of the Lord, who, setting the terrors of his Godhead at defiance, and boldly building on their own worthiness, approaching him with confidence and pride.

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THERE is nothing so indispensably necessary towards the establishment of future earthly, as well as heavenly happiness, as early impressions of piety. For, as religion is the sole source of all human welfare and peace, so habits of religious reflection, in the spring of life, are the only means of arriving at a due sense of the importance of divine concerns in age, except by the bitter and hazardous roads of repentance and remorse. There is not a more awful spectacle in nature, than the death-bed of a *late* repentance. The groans of agony which attend the separation of the soul from the body, heightened by the heart-piercing exclamation of mental distress; the dreadful ebullitions of horror and remorse, intermingled with the half-fearful, but fervent deprecations of the divine wrath, and prayers for the divine mercy, joined to the pathetic imploring to the friends who stand weeping around the bed of the sinner to pray for him, and to take warning from his awful end, con-

tribute to render this scene such an impressive and terrible memento of the state of those who have neglected their souls, as must bring to a due sense of his duty the most hardened of infidels.

It is to ensure you, my young friends, as far as precepts can ensure you, from horrors like these in your last moments, that I write this little book, in the hopes that, through the blessing of the Divine Being, it may be useful in inducing you to reflect on the importance of early piety, and lead you into the cheerful performance of your duties to God, and to your own souls. In the pursuit of this plan, I shall, first, consider the bliss which results from a pious disposition, and the horrors of a wicked one. Secondly, the necessity of an early attention to the concerns of the soul towards the establishment of permanent religion, and its consequent happiness; and, thirdly, I shall point out and contrast the last moments of those who have acted in conformity, or in contradiction to the rules here laid down.

The contrast between the lives of the good and the wicked man affords such convincing arguments in support of the excellence of religion, that even those infidels who have dared to assert their disbelief of the doctrine of Revelation, have confessed that in a political point of view, if in no other, it ought to be maintained. Compare the peaceful and collected course of the virtuous and pious man, with the turbulent irregularity and violence of him who neglects his soul for the allurements of vice, and judge for yourselves of the policy of the conduct of each, even in this world. Whose pleasures are the most exquisite? Whose delights the most lasting? Whose state is the most enviable? His who barter his hopes of eternal welfare for a few fleeting moments of brutal gratification, or his who,

while he keeps a future state alone in his view, finds happiness in the conscientious performance of his duties, and the scrupulous fulfilment of the end of his sojourn here? Believe me, my friends, there is no comparison between them. The joys of the infatuated mortal who sacrifices his soul to his sensualities, are mixed with bitterness and anguish. The voice of conscience rises distinctly to his ear, amid the shouts of intemperance and the sallies of obstreperous mirth. In the hour of rejoicing, she whispers her appalling monitions to him, and his heart sinks within him, and the smile of triumphant villany is converted into the ghastly grin of horror and hopelessness. But, oh! in the languid intervals of dissipation; in the dead hour of the night, when all is solitude and silence, when the soul is driven to commune with itself, and the voice of remorse, whose whispers were before half-drowned in the noise of riot, rises dreadfully distinct—what!—what are his emotions!—Who can paint his agonies, his execrations, his despair! Let that man lose again, in the vortex of fashion, and folly, and vice, the remembrance of his horrors: let him smile, let him laugh and be merry; believe me, my dear readers, he is *not* happy, he is *not* careless, he is *not* the jovial being he appears to be. His heart is heavy within him; he cannot stifle the reflections which assail him in the very moment of enjoyment; but strip the painted veil from his bosom, lay aside the trappings of folly, and that man is *miserable*, and not only so, but he has purchased that misery at the expense of eternal torment.

Let us oppose to this awful picture the life of the good man; of him who rises in the morning with cheerfulness to praise his Creator for all the good he hath bestowed upon him, and to perform with studious exactness the duties of his station; and lays himself down on his pillow

in the evening in the sweet consciousness of the applause of his own heart. Place this man on the stormy seas of misfortune and sorrow—press him with afflictive dispensations of Providence—snatch from his arms the object of his affections—separate him for ever from all he loved and held dear on earth, and leave him isolated and an outcast in the world,—he is calm—he is composed—he is grateful—he weeps, for human nature is weak, but he still preserves his composure and resignation—he still looks up to the Giver of all good with thankfulness and praise, and perseveres with calmness and fortitude in the paths of righteousness. His disappointments cannot overwhelm him, for his chief hopes are placed far, very far, beyond the reach of human vicissitude. ‘He hath chosen that good part, which none can take away from him.’

Here, then, lies the great excellence of religion and piety; they not only lead to *eternal* happiness, but to the happiness of this world; they not only ensure everlasting bliss, but they are the sole means of arriving at that degree of felicity which this dark and stormy being is capable of, and are the sole supports in the hour of adversity and affliction. How infatuated then must that man be, who can wilfully shut his eyes to his own welfare, and deviate from the paths of righteousness which lead to bliss! Even allowing him to entertain the erroneous notion that religion does not lead to happiness in this life, his conduct is incompatible with every idea of a reasonable being. In the *Spectator* we find the following image employed to induce a conviction of the magnitude of this truth; supposing the whole body of the earth were a great ball, or mass of the finest sand, and that a single grain, or particle of this sand, should be annihilated every thousand years; supposing, then, that you had it in your choice to be happy all the while

this prodigious mass was consuming, by this slow method, till there was not a grain of it left, on condition that you were to be miserable ever after ; or supposing that you might be happy for ever after, on condition you would be miserable till the whole mass of sand were thus annihilated, at the rate of one sand a thousand years ; which of these two cases would you make your choice !

It must be confessed that in this case so many * * *

The life of man is transient and unstable ; its fairest passages are but a lighter shade of evil, and yet those passages form but a disproportionate part of the picture. We all seek happiness, though with different degrees of avidity, while the fickle object of our pursuits continually evades the grasp of those who are the most eager in the chase ; and perhaps at last throws herself into the arms of those who had entirely lost all sight of her, and who when they are more blessed with her enjoyment, are least conscious that they possess her. Were the objects in which we placed the consummation of our wishes always virtuous, and the means employed to arrive at the bourn of our desires uniformly good, there can be little doubt that the aggregate of mankind would be as happy as is consistent with the state in which they live ; but, unfortunately, vicious men pursue vicious ends by vicious means, and, by so doing, not only ensure their own misery, but they overturn and destroy the fair designs of the wiser and the better of their kind. Thus he who has no idea of a bliss beyond the gratification of his brutal appetites, involves in the crime of seduction, the peace and repose of a good and happy family, and an individual act of evil extends itself by a continued impulse over a large portion of society. It is thus that men of bad minds become the pests of the societies of which they happen to be members. It is thus that

the virtuous among men pay the bitter penalty of the crimes and follies of their unworthy fellows.

Men who have passed their whole lives in the lap of luxury and enjoyment, have no idea of misery beyond that of which they happen to be the individual objects.

KIRKE WHITE.

STANZAS.

THE turf shall be my fragrant shrine,
My temple, Lord, that arch of thine,
My censer's breath the mountain airs,
And silent thoughts my only prayers.

My choir shall be the moonlight waves,
When murmuring homeward to their caves;
Or, when the stillness of the sea,
Even more than music, breathes of Thee!

I'll seek, by day, some glade unknown,
All light and silence like thy throne!
And the pale stars shall be, at night,
The only eyes that watch my rite.

Thy heaven, on which 'tis bliss to look,
Shall be my pure and shining book,
Where I shall read, in words of flame,
The glories of thy wondrous name.

I'll read thy anger in the rack
That clouds a while the day-beam's track;
Thy mercy in the azure hue
Of sunny brightness, breaking through!

There's nothing bright, above, below,
 From flowers that bloom to stars that glow,
 But in its light my soul can see
 Some feature of thy Deity !

There's nothing dark, below, above,
 But in its gloom I trace thy love,
 And meekly wait that moment, when
 Thy touch shall turn all bright again !

MOORE.

THE CREATOR OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD IS THE GOVERNOR OF THE MORAL WORLD.

WITH our views of the moral government of the world and the religious interests of man, the study of material nature is not and can not be directly and closely connected. But it may be of some service to trace in these two lines of reasoning, seemingly so remote, a manifest convergence to the same point, a demonstrable unity of result. It may be useful to show that we are thus led, not to two rulers of the universe, but to one God;—to make it appear that the Creator and Preserver of the world is also the Governor and Judge of men;—that the Author of the Laws of Nature is also the Author of the Law of Duty;—that he who regulates corporeal things by properties of attraction and affinity and assimilating power, is the same being who regulates the actions and conditions of men, by the influence of the feeling of responsibility, the perception of right and wrong, the hope of happiness, the love of good.

The conviction that the Divine attributes which we are taught by the study of the material world, and those

which we learn from the contemplation of man as a responsible agent, belong to the same Divine Being, will be forced upon us, if we consider the manner in which all the parts of the universe, the corporeal and intellectual, the animal and moral, are connected with each other. In each of these provinces of creation we trace refined adaptations and arrangements which lead us to the Creator and Director of so skilful a system; but these provinces are so intermixed, these different trains of contrivance so interwoven, that we cannot, in our thoughts, separate the author of one part from the author of another. The Creator of the Heavens and of the Earth, of the inorganic and of the organic world, of animals and of man, of the affections and the conscience, appears inevitably to be one and the same God.

We will pursue this reflection a little more into detail.

1. The *Atmosphere* is a mere mass of fluid floating on the surface of the ball of the earth; it is one of the inert and inorganic portions of the universe, and must be conceived to have been formed by the same Power which formed the solid mass of the earth and all other parts of the solar system. But how far is the atmosphere from being inert in its effects on organic beings, and unconnected with the world of life! By what wonderful adaptations of its mechanical and chemical properties, and of the vital powers of plants to each other, are the developement and well-being of plants and animals secured! The creator of the atmosphere must have been also the creator of plants and animals: we cannot for an instant believe the contrary. But the atmosphere is not only subservient to the life of animals, and of man among the rest; it is also the vehicle of voice; it answers the purpose of intercourse; and, in the case of man, of rational intercourse. We have seen how remarkably the

air is fitted for this office; the construction of the organs of articulation, by which they are enabled to perform their part of the work, is, as is well known, a most exquisite system of contrivances. But though living in an atmosphere capable of transmitting articulate sound, and though provided with organs fitted to articulate, man would never attain to the use of language, if he were not also endowed with another set of faculties. The powers of abstraction and generalization, memory and reason, the tendencies which occasion the inflexions and combinations of words, are all necessary to the formation and use of language. Are not these parts of the same scheme of which the bodily faculties by which we are able to speak are another part? Has man his mental powers independently of the creator of his bodily frame? To what purpose then, or by what cause was the curious and complex machinery of the tongue, the glottis, the larynx produced? These are useful for speech, and full of contrivances which suggest such a use as the end for which those organs were constructed. But speech appears to have been no less contemplated in the intellectual structure of man. The processes of which we have spoken, generalization, abstraction, reasoning, have a close dependence on the use of speech. These faculties are presupposed in the formation of language, but they are developed and perfected by the use of language. The mind of man then, with all its intellectual endowments, is the work of the same artist by whose hands his bodily frame was fashioned; as his bodily faculties again are evidently constructed by the maker of those elements on which their action depends. The creator of the atmosphere and of the material universe is the creator of the human mind, and the author of those wonderful powers of thinking, judging, inferring,

discovering, by which we are able to reason concerning the world in which we are placed ; and which aid us in lifting our thoughts to the source of our being himself.

2. *Light*, or the means by which light is propagated, is another of the inorganic elements which forms a portion of the mere material world. The luminiferous ether, if we adopt that theory, or the fluid light of the theory of emission, must indubitably pervade the remotest regions of the universe, and must be supposed to exist, as soon as we suppose the material parts of the universe to be in existence. The origin of light then must be at least as far removed from us as the origin of the solar system. Yet how closely connected are the properties of light with the structure of our own bodies ! The mechanism of the organs of vision and the mechanism of light are, as we have seen, most curiously adapted to each other. We must suppose, then, that the same power and skill produced one and the other of these two sets of contrivances, which so remarkably *fit into* each other. The creator of light is the author of our visual powers. But how small a portion does mere visual perception constitute of the advantages which we derive from vision ! We possess ulterior faculties and capacities by which sight becomes a source of happiness and good to man. The sense of beauty, the love of art, the pleasure arising from the contemplation of nature, are all dependent on the eye ; and we can hardly doubt that these faculties were bestowed on man to further the best interests of his being. The sense of beauty both animates and refines his domestic tendencies ; the love of art is a powerful instrument for raising him above the mere cravings and satisfactions of his animal nature ; the expansion of mind which rises in us at the sight of the starry sky, the cloud-clapt mountain, the boundless

ocean, seems intended to direct our thoughts by an impressive though indefinite feeling, to the Infinite Author of All. But if these faculties be thus part of the scheme of man's inner being, given him by a good and wise creator, can we suppose that this creator was any other than the creator also of those visual organs, without which the faculties could have no operation and no existence? As clearly as light and the eye are the work of the same author, so clearly also do our capacities for the most exalted visual pleasures, and the feelings flowing from them, proceed from the same Divine Hand, by which the mechanism of light was constructed.

3. The creator of the earth must be conceived to be the author also of all those qualities in the soil, chemical and whatever else, by which it supports vegetable life, under all the modifications of natural and artificial condition. Among the attributes which the earth thus possesses, there are some which seem to have an especial reference to man in a state of society. Such are the power of the earth to increase its produce under the influence of cultivation, and the necessary existence of property in land, in order that this cultivation may be advantageously applied; the rise under such circumstances, of a *surplus* produce, of a quantity of subsistence exceeding the wants of the cultivators alone; and the consequent possibility of inequalities of rank and of all the arrangements of civil society. These are all parts of the constitution of the earth. But these would all remain mere idle possibilities, if the nature of man had not a corresponding direction. If man had not a social and economical tendency, a disposition to congregate and co-operate, to distribute possessions and offices among the members of the community, to make and obey and enforce laws, the earth would in vain be ready

to respond to the care of the husbandman. Must we not then suppose that this attribute of the earth was bestowed upon it by Him who gave to man those corresponding attributes, through which the apparent niggardliness of the soil is the source of general comfort and security, of polity and law? Must we not suppose that He who created the soil also inspired man with those social desires and feelings which produce cities and states, laws and institutions, arts and civilization; and that thus the apparently inert mass of earth is a part of the same scheme as those faculties and powers with which man's moral and intellectual progress is most connected?

4. Again:—It will hardly be questioned that the author of the material elements is also the author of the structure of animals, which is adapted to and provided for by the constitution of the elements in such innumerable ways. But the author of the bodily structure of animals must also be the author of their instincts, for without these the structure would not answer its purpose. And these instincts frequently assume the character of affections in a most remarkable manner. The love of offspring, of home, of companions, are often displayed by animals, in a way that strikes the most indifferent observer; and yet these affections will hardly be denied to be a part of the same scheme as the instincts by which the same animals seek food and the gratifications of sense. Who can doubt that the anxious and devoted affection of the mother-bird for her young after they are hatched, is a part of the same system of Providence as the instinct by which she is impelled to sit upon her eggs? and this, of the same by which her eggs are so organized that incubation leads to the birth of the young animal? Nor, again, can we imagine that

while the structure and affections of animals belong to one system of things, the affections of man, in many respects so similar to those of animals, and connected with the bodily frame in a manner so closely analogous, can belong to a different scheme. Who, that reads the touching instances of maternal affection, related so often of the women of all nations, and of the females of all animals, can doubt that the principal of action is the same in two cases, though enlightened in one of them by the rational faculty? And who can place in separate provinces the supporting and protecting love of the father and of the mother? or consider as entirely distinct from these, and belonging to another part of our nature, the other kinds of family affection? or disjoin man's love of his home, his clan, his tribe, his country, from the affection which he bears to his family? The love of offspring, home, friends, in man, is then part of the same system of contrivances of which bodily organization is another part. And thus the author of our corporeal frame is also the author of our capacity of kindness and resentment, of our love and of our wish to be loved, of all the emotions which bind us to individuals, to our families, and to our kind.

It is not necessary here to follow out and classify these emotions and affections; or to examine how they are combined and connected with our other motives of action, mutually giving and receiving strength and direction. The desire of esteem, of power, of knowledge, of society, the love of kindred, of friends, of our country, are manifestly among the main forces by which man is urged to act and to abstain. And as these parts of the constitution of man are clearly intended, as we conceive, to impel him in his appointed path; so we conceive that they are no less clearly the work of the

same great Artificer who created the heart, the eye, the hand, the tongue, and that elemental world in which, by means of these instruments, man pursues the objects of his appetites, desires, and affections.

5. But if the Creator of the world be also the author of our intellectual powers, of our feeling for the beautiful and the sublime, of our social tendencies, and of our natural desires and affections, we shall find it impossible not to ascribe also to Him the higher directive attributes of our nature, the conscious and the religious feeling, the reference of our actions to the rule of duty and to the will of God.

It would not suit the plan of the present treatise to enter into any detailed analysis of the connexion of these various portions of our moral constitution. But we may observe that the existence and universality of the conception of duty and right cannot be doubted, however men may differ as to its original or derivative nature. All men are perpetually led to form judgments concerning actions, and emotions which lead to action, as right or wrong; as what they *ought* or *ought not* to do or feel. There is a faculty which approves and disapproves, acquits or condemns the workings of our other faculties. Now, what shall we say of such a judiciary principle, thus introduced among our motives to action? Shall we conceive that while the other springs of action are balanced against each other by our Creator, this, the most pervading and universal regulator, was no part of the original scheme? That—while the love of animal pleasures, of power, of fame, the regard for friends, the pleasure of bestowing pleasure, were infused into man as influences by which his course of life was to be carried on, and his capacities and powers developed and exercised;—this reverence for a moral

law, this acknowledgment of the obligation of duty,—a feeling which is everywhere found, and which may become a powerful, a predominating motive of action,—was given for no purpose, and belongs not to the design? Such an opinion would be much as if we should acknowledge the skill and contrivance manifested in the other parts of a ship, but should refuse to recognize the rudder as exhibiting any evidence of a purpose. Without the reverence which the opinion of right inspires, and the scourge of general disapprobation inflicted on that which is accounted wicked, society could scarcely go on; and certainly the feelings and thoughts and characters of men could not be what they are. Those impulses of nature which involve no acknowledgment of responsibility, and the play and struggle of interfering wishes, might preserve the species in some shape of existence, as we see in the case of brutes. But a person must be strangely constituted, who, living amid the respect for law, the admiration for what is good, the order and virtues and graces of civilized nations, (all which have their origin in some degree in the feeling of responsibility) can maintain that all these are casual and extraneous circumstances, no way contemplated in the formation of man; and that a condition in which there should be no obligation in law, no merit in self-restraint, no beauty in virtue, is equally suited to the powers and the nature of man, and was equally contemplated when those powers were given him.

If this supposition be too extravagant to be admitted, as it appears to be, it remains then that man, intended, as we have already seen from his structure and properties, to be a discoursing, social being, acting under the influence of affections, desires, and purposes, was also intended to act under the influence of a sense of duty;

and that the acknowledgment of the obligation of a moral law is as much part of his nature, as hunger or thirst, maternal love or the desire of power; that, therefore, in conceiving man as the work of a Creator, we must imagine his powers and character given him with an intention on the Creator's part that this sense of duty should occupy its place in his constitution as an active and thinking being: and that this directive and judiciary principle is a part of the work of the same Author who made the elements to minister to the material functions, and the arrangements of the world to occupy the individual and social affections of his living creatures.

This principle of conscience, it may further be observed, does not stand upon the same level as the other impulses of our constitution by which we are prompted or restrained. By its very nature and essence, it possesses a supremacy over all others. "Your obligation to obey this law is its being the law of your nature. That your conscience approves of and attests such a course of action is itself alone an obligation. Conscience does not only offer itself to show us the way we should walk in, but it likewise carries its own authority with it, that it is our natural guide: the guide assigned us by the author of our nature."* That we ought to do an action, is of itself a sufficient and ultimate answer to the questions, *why* we should do it?—how we are *obliged* to do it? The conviction of duty implies the soundest reason, the strongest obligation, of which our nature is susceptible.

We appear then to be using only language which is well capable of being justified, when we speak of this irresistible esteem for what is right, this conviction of a rule of action extending beyond the gratification of our

* Butler, Sermon 3.

irreflective impulses, as an impress stamped upon the human mind by the Deity himself; a trace of His nature; an indication of His will; an announcement of His purpose; a promise of His favour; and though this faculty may need to be confirmed and unfolded, instructed and assisted by other aids, it still seems to contain in itself a sufficient intimation that the highest objects of man's existence are to be attained, by means of a direct and intimate reference of his thoughts and actions to the Divine Author of his being.

Such then is the Deity to which the researches of Natural Theology point; and so far is the train of reflections in which we have engaged, from being merely speculative and barren. With the material world we cannot stop. If a superior Intelligence *have* ordered and adjusted the succession of seasons and the structure of the plants of the field, we must allow far more than this at first sight would seem to imply. We must admit still greater powers, still higher wisdom for the creation of the beasts of the forest with their faculties; and higher wisdom still and more transcendent attributes, for the creation of man. And when we reach this point, we find that it is not knowledge only, not power only, not foresight and beneficence alone, which we must attribute to the Maker of the World; but that we must consider him as the Author, in us, of a reverence for moral purity and rectitude; and if the author of such emotions in us, how can we conceive of Him otherwise, than that these qualities are parts of his nature; and that he is not only wise and great, and good, incomparably beyond our highest conceptions, but also conformed in his purposes to the rule which he thus impresses upon us, that is, Holy in the highest degree which we can image to ourselves as possible.

WHEWELL.

THE ALTAR'S SIMPLICITY.

“And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.”—EXODUS, xx. 25.

LORD! may the precept still impart
Its import to the Christian's heart,
And teach us, as we look to Thee,
Thy worship's true simplicity.

If thus, 'mid ancient forms, the aid
Of human art thy word forbade,
Choosing for altar of thine own
Unhewn, and unpolluted stone:—

By more than emblematic speech
Thy Spirit *now* this truth would teach
Altars of flesh, like those of stone,
Must be prepar'd by Thee alone.

If now to Thee we build no more
An outward shrine as heretofore,
That in the heart, if truly thine,
Must yet be rear'd by power divine.

The meddling touch of human will
Would make that shrine polluted still;
The utmost stretch of human powers
Would leave the fabric only *ours*.

Thine it should be ; in mercy deign
 To build—what we but build in vain,
 And when the work by Thee is done
 Accept its incense through thy Son.

BARTON.

DISCUSSION ON THE PUNISHMENT OF DEATH, FOR MURDER, BY THE CHIEFS OF THE ISLAND OF TAHITI.

THE punishment for murder.—This main question, which was to determine whether, in any case, man's blood was to be shed under the sanction of laws made by a Christian legislature, unfettered either by antiquated usage or prejudices, occupied many hours of the first and second day's sittings ;—death, or perpetual banishment to some uninhabited island, being the alternatives proposed. At length, it was unanimously resolved that the latter should be adopted.

To shew the spirit and candour, as well as good sense with which the discussions were conducted, we shall furnish a sketch of some of the principal speeches delivered on the first and second day, in reference to death or banishment for murder.

On the question being proposed, Iitoti, the principal chief of Papeete stood up, and, bowing to the President and the persons around him, said: "No doubt this is a good law,"—the *proposed* punishment was exile for life to a desolate island,—“but a thought has been growing in my heart for several days, and when you have heard my little speech you will understand what it is. The

laws of England, from which country we have received so much good of every kind—must not they be good? And do not the laws of England punish murderers by death? Now, my thought is, that as England does so, it would be well for us to do so. That is my thought.”

Perfect silence followed;—and it may be observed here that, during the whole eight days’ meetings of this Parliament, in no instance were two speakers on their legs at the same time; there was not an angry word uttered by one against another; nor did any assume the possession of more knowledge than the rest. In fact, none controverted the opinion of a preceding speaker, or even remarked upon it, without some respectful commendations of what appeared praiseworthy in it; while, for reasons which he modestly but manfully assigned, he deemed another sentiment better.

After looking round to see whether any body were already up before him, Utani, the principal chief of Buanaaia, rose and thus addressed the president; “The chief of Papeete has said well, that we have received a great many good things from the kind Christian people of England. Indeed, what have we not received from Beretane? Did they not send us (*area*) the gospel?—But does not Hitoti’s speech go too far? If we take the laws of England for our guide, then must we not punish with death those who break into a house?—those who write a wrong name?—those who steal a sheep? And will any man in Tahiti say that death should grow for these?—No, no; this goes too far; so I think we should stop. The law, as it is written, I think is good; perhaps I am wrong; but that is my thought.”

After a moment or two of stillness, Upuparu, a noble, intelligent, and stately chief, stood forth. It was a

pleasure to look upon his animated countenance and frank demeanour, without the smallest affectation either of superiority or condescension. He paid several graceful compliments to the former speakers, while, according to his thought, in some things each was right, and each was wrong. "My brother, Hitoti, who proposed that we should punish murder with death, because England does so, was wrong, as has been shewn by Utami. For they are not the laws of England which are to guide us, though they are good;—the Bible is our perfect guide. Now, *Mitti Trutu* (the Missionary Crook) was preaching to us on (naming the day), from the Scripture, 'He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed;' and he told us that this was the reason of the law of England. My thought, therefore, is not with Utami, but with Hitoti (though not because the law of England, but because the Bible, orders it), that we ought to punish with death every one found guilty of murder."

There was a lively exchange of looks all through the assembly, as if each had been deeply struck with the sentiments of the speaker, especially when he placed the ground of the punishment of death, not upon English precedent, but Scripture authority. Another chief followed, and "rising, seemed a pillar of state," one whose aspect, and presence, and costume of dress (richly native) made the spectators forget even him who had just sat down. His name was Tati; and on him all eyes were immediately and intensely fixed, while, with not less simplicity and deference to others than those who had preceded him, he spoke thus: "Perhaps some of you may be surprised that I, who am the first chief here, and next to the royal family, should have held my peace so long. I wished to hear what my brethren would say, that I might gather what thoughts had grown in their

breasts on this great question. I am glad that I waited, because some thoughts are now growing in my own breast which I did not bring with me. The chiefs, who have spoken before me, have spoken well. But is not the speech of Upuparu like that of his brother, Hitoti—in this way? If we cannot follow the laws of England, in all things, as Hitoti's thoughts would perhaps lead us, because they go too far,—must we not stop short of Upuparu, because his thought goes too far likewise? The Bible, he says, is our perfect guide. It is. But what does that Scripture mean, 'He that sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' Does not this go so far that we cannot follow it to the end, any more than we can follow the laws of England all the way? I am Tati; I am a judge; a man is convicted before me; he has shed blood; I order him to be put to death; I shed *his* blood; then who shall shed *mine*? Here, because I cannot go *so* far, I must stop. This cannot be the meaning of those words. But, perhaps, since many of the laws of the Old Testament were thrown down by the Lord Jesus Christ, and only some kept standing upright,—perhaps, I say, this is one of those which were thrown down. However, as I am ignorant, some one else will shew me, that, in the New Testament, our Saviour, or his Apostles, have said the same thing concerning him that sheddeth man's blood as is said in the Old Testament. Shew me this in the New Testament, and then it must be our guide.

Much cordial approbation was evident at the conclusion of Tati's speech, and its evangelical appeal seemed to remove some difficulty and doubt respecting the true scriptural authority applicable to the case.

Next rose Pati, a chief and a judge of Eimeo, formerly a high-priest of Oro, and the first who, at the hazard of

his life, had abjured idolatry. "My breast," he exclaimed, "is full of thought, and surprise, and delight. When I look round at this *fare bure ra* (house of God) in which we are assembled, and consider who we are that take sweet counsel together here, it is to me all *mea huru e* (a thing of amazement,) and *mea faa oaoa te aau* (a thing that makes glad my heart.) Tati has settled the question; for is it not the gospel that is our guide? and who can find directions for putting to death? I know many passages which forbid, but I know not one which commands, to kill. But then another thought is growing in my breast, and, if you will hearken to my little speech, you shall know what it is. Laws, to punish those that commit crime, are good for us. But tell me, why do Christians punish? Is it because we are angry, and have pleasure in causing pain? Is it because we love revenge, as we did when we were heathens? None of these: Christians do not love revenge; Christians must not be angry; they cannot have pleasure in causing pain. Christians do not, therefore, punish for these. Is it not that, by the suffering which is inflicted, we may prevent the criminal from repeating his crime, and frighten others from doing as he has done to deserve the like? Well, then, does not every body know that it would be a greater punishment to be banished for ever from Tahiti, to a desolate island, than just, in a moment, to be put to death? And could the banished man commit murder again there? And would not others be more frightened by such a sentence than by one to take away his life? So my thought is, that Tati is right, and the law had best remain as it has been written."

One of the *taata rii*, or little men, a commoner, or representative of a district, now presented himself, and was listened to with as much attention as had been given

to the lordly personages who preceded him. He said :
 “ As no one else stands up, I will make my little speech, because several pleasant thoughts have been growing in my breast, and I wish you to hear them. Perhaps every thing good and necessary has been said already by the chiefs ; yet, as we are not met to adopt this law or that law, because one great man or another recommends it, but as we, the *taata rii*, just the same as the chiefs, are to throw all our thoughts together, that out of the whole heap the meeting may make those to stand upright which are best, whencesoever they come—this is my thought. All that Pati said was good ; but he did not mention that one reason for punishing (as a Missionary told us, when he was reading the law to us, in private) is, to make the offender good again if possible. Now, if we kill a murderer, how can we make him better ? But if he be sent to a desolate island, where he is all solitary, and compelled to think for himself, it may please God to make the bad things in his heart to die, and good things to grow there. But, if we kill him, where will his soul go ? ”

Others spoke to the same purport, and, in the result, it was unanimously determined that banishment, not death, should be inflicted on murderers. It followed, of course, that the extreme exercise of magisterial power, to take away life, was excluded from every other case.

TYERMAN & BENNET'S TRAVELS.

SONNET.

WHAT art thou, MIGHTY ONE! and where thy seat
 Thou broodest on the calm that cheers the lands,
 And thou dost bear within thine awful hands
 The rolling thunders and the lightnings fleet;
 Stern on thy dark-wrought ear of cloud and wind,
 Thou guid'st the northern storm at night's dead noon,
 Or, on the red wing of the fierce Monsoon,
 Disturb'st the sleeping giant of the Ind.
 In the drear silence of the polar span
 Dost thou repose? or in the solitude
 Of sultry tracts, where the lone caravan
 Hears nightly howl the tiger's hungry brood?
 Vain thought! the confines of his throne to trace,
 Who glows through all the fields of boundless space.

KIRKE WHITE.

THE CHRISTIAN VIRGIN'S ADDRESS TO HER
 APOSTATE LOVER.

O! LOST to faith, to peace, to Heaven!
 Canst thou a recreant be
 To Him whose life for thine was given,
 Whose Cross endured for thee?
 Canst thou for earthly joys resign
 A love immortal, pure, divine,
 Yet link thy plighted truth to mine,
 And cleave unchanged to me?

Thou canst not—and 'tis breathed in vain—
 The sophistry of love;—

Though not in pride or cold disdain
 Thy falsehood I approve ;—
 Inly my heart may bleed—but yet
 Mine is no weak, no vain regret ;
 Thy wrongs to me I might forget—
 But not to Him above.

Cease then—thy fond impassion'd vow,
 In happier hours so dear ;
 (No virgin pride restrains me now)
 I must not turn to hear ;
 For still my erring heart might prove
 Too weak to spurn thy proffer'd love ;
 And tears, though feign'd and false, might move,
 And prayers, though insincere.

But no ! the tie so firmly bound
 Is torn asunder now ;
 How deep that sudden wrench may wound,
 It reeks not to avow ;
 Go thou to fortune and to fame ;
 I sink to sorrow—suff'ring—shame—
 Yet think, when Glory gilds thy name,
 I would not be as thou.

Thou canst not light or wavering deem
 The bosom all thine own ;
 Thou know'st in Joy's enlivening beam,
 Or Fortune's adverse frown,
 My pride, my bliss had been to share
 Thy hopes ; to sooth thine hours of care ;
 With thee the Martyr's cross to bear,
 Or win the Martyr's crown.

'Tis o'er; but never from my heart
 Shall Time thine image blot;
 The dreams of other days depart;
 Thou shalt not be forgot;
 And never in the suppliant sigh
 Pour'd forth to Him who sways the sky,
 Shall mine own name be breathed on high,
 And thine remember'd not.

Farewell! and O! may He whose love
 Endures though Man rebel,
 In mercy yet thy guilt reprove;
 Thy darkening clouds dispel:
 Where'er thy wandering steps incline,
 My foudest prayers—nor only mine;—
 The aid of Israel's God be thine;
 And in His name—Farewell!

DALE.

AUTHORITY OF THE CONSCIENCE.

WITH respect to the *authority* which properly belongs to Conscience as a director of individual conduct, it appears manifest alike from reason and from scripture, that it is great. When a man believes, upon due deliberation, that a certain action is right, that action is right *to him*. And this is true, whether the action be or be not required of mankind by the moral law.* The fact that in his mind the sense of obligation attaches to the

* By Conscience, all men are restrained from intentional ill—it infallibly directs us to avoid guilt, but is not intended to secure us from error.—Advent. No. 91.

act, and that he has duly deliberated upon the accuracy of his judgment, makes the dictate of his Conscience upon that subject an *authoritative* dictate. The individual is to be held guilty if he violates his Conscience—if he does one thing, whilst his sense of obligation is directed to its contrary. Nor, if his judgment should not be accurately informed, if his sense of obligation should not be connected with a proper subject, is the guilt of violating his conscience taken away. Were it otherwise, a person might be held virtuous for acting in opposition to his apprehensions of duty; or guilty, for doing what he believed to be right. “It is happy for us that our title to the character of virtuous beings, depends not upon the justness of our opinions or the constant objective rectitude of all we do, but upon the conformity of our actions to the sincere convictions of our minds.”* Dr. Furneaux says, “To secure the favour of God and the rewards of true religion, we must follow our own consciences and judgments *according to the best light* we can attain.”† And I am especially disposed to add the testimony of Sir William Temple, because he recognizes the doctrine which has just been advanced, that our judgments are enlightened by superhuman agency. “The way to our future happiness must be left, at last, to the *impressions made upon every man’s belief and conscience*, either by natural or *supernatural* arguments and means.”‡ Accordingly, there appears no reason to doubt that some will stand convicted in the sight of the Omniscient Judge, for actions which his moral law has not forbidden; and that some may be uncondemned for actions which that law does not allow. The distinction here is the same as that to which we have before had occasion to allude,

* Dr. Price. † Essay on Toleration. ‡ Works, vol. 1. p. 55.

between the desert of the agent and the quality of the act. Of this distinction an illustration is contained in Isaiah x. It was the divine will that a certain specific course of action should be pursued in punishing the Israelites. For the performance of this the king of Assyria was employed: "I will give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets." This charge the Assyrian monarch fulfilled;—he did the will of God. But then his *intention* was criminal; he "meant not so:" and therefore, when the "whole work" is performed, "I will *punish*," says the Almighty, "the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria and the glory of his high looks."

But it was said, that these principles respecting the authority of Conscience were recognized in scripture. "One believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth herbs. One man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike." Here then are differences, nay contrarieties of conscientious judgments. And what are the parties directed severally to do? "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" that is, let the full persuasion of his own mind be every man's rule of action. The situation of these parties was, that one *perceived the truth* upon the subject and the other did not; that in one the sense of obligation was connected with an accurate, in the other with an inaccurate, opinion. Thus again; "*I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean of itself*;"—therefore, absolutely speaking, it is lawful to eat all things: "*but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*" The question is not whether his judgment was correct, but what that judgment actually was. To the doubter, the

uncleanness, that is the *sin* of eating, was certain though the act was right. Again ; “All things indeed are pure, but it is evil *for that man* who eateth with offence.” And again as a general rule ; “He that doubteth is condemned if he eat, *because* he eateth not of faith. for *whatsoever* is not of faith, is sin.”

And here we possess a sufficient answer to those who affect to make light of the authority of Conscience, and exclaim, “Every man pleads his conscientious opinions, and that he is bound in conscience to do this or that : and yet his neighbour makes the same plea and urges the same obligation to do just the contrary.” But what then ? These persons’ judgments differed : that we might expect, for they are fallible ; but their sense of obligation was in each case really attached to its subject, and was in each case authoritative.

One observation remains ; that although a man ought to make his conduct conform to his conscience, yet he may sometimes justly be held criminal for the errors of his opinion. Men often judge amiss respecting their duties, in consequence of their own faults : some take little pains to ascertain the truth, some voluntarily exclude knowledge ; and most men would possess more accurate perceptions of the moral law if they sufficiently endeavoured to obtain them. And therefore, although a man may not be punished for a given *act* which he ignorantly supposes to be lawful, he may be punished for that ignorance in which his supposition originates. Which consideration may perhaps account for the expression, that he who ignorantly failed to do his master’s will, “shall be beaten with few stripes.” There is a degree of wickedness, to the agents of which God at length “sends strong delusion” that they may “believe a lie.” In this state of strong delusion, they perhaps may, with-

out violating any sense of obligation, do many wicked actions. The principles which have been here delivered, would lead us to suppose that the punishment which awaits such men, will have respect rather to that intensity of wickedness of which delusion was the consequence, than to those particular acts which they might ignorantly commit under the influence of the delusion itself. This observation is offered to the reader because some writers have obscured the present subject by speculating upon the moral deserts of those desperately bad men who occasionally have committed atrocious acts under the notion that they were doing right.

DYMOND.

THE SURRENDER OF THE HEART.

(From the German of Martin Luther.)

ACT but the gentle Infant's part,
Give up to love thy willing heart;
No fondest parent's melting breast
Yearns, like thy God's, to make thee blest:
Taught its dear mother soon to know,
The tenderest babe its love can show;
Bid thy base servile fear retire,
This task no labour will require,

The Sovereign Father, good and kind,
Wants to behold his child resign'd;
Wants but thy yielded heart—no more—
With his large gifts of grace to store:
He to thy soul no anguish brings,
From thy own stubborn will it springs;

But crucify that cruel foe,
Nor pain, nor care thy breast shall know.

Shake from thy soul, o'erwhelm'd, oppress,
Th' encumbering load that galls thy rest,
That wastes thy strength in bondage vain;
—With courage break th' enthralling chain:
Let prayer exert its conquering power,
Cry in the tempted, trembling hour,
“My God, my Father, save thy son!”
'Tis heard, and all thy fears are gone.

M. BROWNE.

CONVICTION AND PARDON.

IF ever thou hast felt another's pain,
If ever when he sigh'd has sigh'd again,
If ever on thy eyelid stood the tear,
That pity had engender'd, drop one here.
This man was happy—had the World's good word,
And with it every joy it can afford;
Friendship and love seem'd tenderly at strife,
Which most should sweeten his untroubled life:
Politely learn'd, and of a gentle race,
Good breeding and good sense gave all a grace,
And, whether at the toilette of the fair
He laugh'd and trifled, made him welcome there,
Or if in masculine debate he shared,
Ensured him mute attention and regard.
Alas, how changed! Expressive of his mind,
His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclined;

Those awful syllables, hell, death, and sin,
 Though whisper'd, plainly tell what works within ;
 That Conscience there performs her proper part,
 And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart ;
 Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,
 He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends.
 Hard task ! for one who lately knew no care,
 And harder still as learnt beneath despair ;
 His hours no longer pass unmark'd away,
 A dark importance saddens every day ;
 He hears the notice of the clock perplex'd,
 And cries, " Perhaps Eternity strikes next ;"
 Sweet music is no longer music here,
 And laughter sounds like madness in his ear :
 His grief the World of all her power disarms,
 Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charms :
 God's holy word, once trivial in his view,
 Now by the voice of his experience true,
 Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone
 Must spring that hope he pants to make his own.

Now let the bright reverse be known abroad,
 Say man's a worm, and power belongs to God.
 As when a felon, whom his country's laws
 Have justly doom'd for some atrocious cause,
 Expects in darkness and heart-chilling fears,
 The shameful close of all his mispent years ;
 If chance, on heavy pinions slowly borne,
 A tempest usher in the dreadful morn,
 Upon his dungeon-walls the lightnings play,
 The thunder seems to summon him away ;
 The warder at the door his key applies,
 Shoots back the bolt, and all his courage dies :
 If then, just then, all thoughts of mercy lost,
 When Hope, long lingering, at last yields the ghost,

The sound of pardon pierce his startled ear,
 He drops at once his fetters and his fear;
 A transport glows in all he looks and speaks,
 And the first thankful tears bedew his cheeks.
 Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs
 The comfort of a few poor added days,
 Invades, possesses, and o'erwhelms the soul
 Of him, whom Hope has with a touch made whole.
 'Tis heaven, all heaven, descending on the wings,
 Of the glad legions of the King of kings;
 'Tis more—'tis God diffused through every part,
 'Tis God himself triumphant in his heart.
 O welcome now the sun's once hated light,
 His noonday beams were never half so bright!
 Not kindred minds alone are called t' employ
 Their hours, their days, in listening to his joy;
 Unconscious nature, all that he surveys,
 Rocks, groves, and streams, must join him in his praise.

COWPER.

ON RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS.

MY DEAR —,

THE interest excited in my mind by our late conversation, makes me anxious to fulfil my promise of writing without delay.

The present is an eventful period in your life; upon it, for aught we know to the contrary, hang the issues of life and death—life and death eternal. The convictions and desires which now occupy your mind, are manifest proofs that the Spirit of God is striving with your spirit, drawing you secretly, but I hope, strongly also, to sur-

render yourself wholly and cheerfully, to his service and his guidance. The waters are troubled, I would hope, preparatory to your everlasting healing; and light has dawned upon your heart, in order, I trust, that it may "shine more and more unto the perfect day;" that so, you may become a child of light, and walk in light, and no more stumble in darkness. Beware, then, how you check or slight these gracious influences, lest he who waits to be to you the comforter, be grieved, and depart and hide himself for a while, or perhaps for ever. Cherish these good desires and sacred emotions, that they may not terminate in mere desires and emotions. Seek earnestly that they may "strike root downwards, and bear fruit upwards," even "the fruits of the Spirit," in season and in abundance. If a single seed of grace has fallen into your heart, ask him who is the great husbandman of the soul, to "watch over and water it every moment, lest any hurt it;" lest the deceitfulness of earthly delights impede its growth; lest vain imaginations, or idle habits, devour it ere it spring up; or, lest after shooting forth in green and vigorous strength, temptations, like the scorching sun, wither it for ever. It is no light matter to be a christian. Nothing, not the union of all earthly power and human advantages, can make, or keep you one. It requires an exercise of omnipotent strength, the strength of him who called light out of darkness, and brought water from the flinty rock. Fear, therefore, continually for yourself, but look to God and fear nothing. From the first moment of his pilgrimage to the last, the christian has but one point of safety, one rock of refuge, one place of shelter, and its name is "Constant Dependence." Your task is, ever to look upwards, and inwards, that so you may be preserved from presumption and despair. Never,

surely, was any one more happily placed for becoming "wise unto salvation." Spiritual instruction is, indeed, very nigh; and counteracting influences are removed very far. God, by his dispensations, seems saying to you, "Only incline your ear, hear, and your soul shall live. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding. Ask me, and I will shew thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not."

I would advise you to store your memory, as opportunity offers, with various petitionary passages of scripture, especially from the Psalms, that in the intervals of occupation, in your walks, and in your retirements, you may be furnished with prayers indited by that Spirit who knew the necessities and temptations of the human heart. You will find this habit of silent, momentary, ejaculatory petition, a great means of preserving that sedateness of feeling and quietness of deportment, which, even in the vivacity of youth, should characterise the christian.

Dear —, I do hope God will strengthen you, that you may be able to stand, and at once and for ever turn your steps towards this narrow but pleasant path, which issues in rest eternal and glorious. What better can you do? Is it not, indeed, a reasonable service? Is not the present the best time to engage in it? Only think of the different retrospect you will have on a death-bed. Supposing (fearful supposition!) that your present desires wear off, and that, notwithstanding, you should be saved at a ninth or an eleventh hour, think of the remorse prevented, the active good effected, the privileges enjoyed, the blessings diffused, by those who walk with God "from youth even to hoar hairs." Think of the tempta-

tions they escape, the sorrows they never feel, all suffered, and all felt, by those who enter the vineyard in later life. Think again of the fearful uncertainty which involves the future, and resolve, determine, act—now. Ask God to enlarge your heart, and set you in the way of his commandments; tell him you have no might, but plead his promise “to increase strength;” to “strengthen the spoiled against the strong;” to tread down your spiritual enemies under your feet; to arm you with the whole armour of God, and then teach you how to use it. Never fear that his gracious ear will be wearied with the tale of your sins, your wants, and your weaknesses. May he lead you into all truth, enable you to walk humbly, and therefore surely, and now, in these the bright and joyous hours of life, unite you to himself in that bond which can never be broken; which gives power over the vicissitudes of time and the world, and even over death and hell! May he enable you not merely to begin, but to end well; that having overcome through faith, you may inherit all those royal promises, the fulfilment of which, if completed in heaven, commences here below. One thing is certain; of vacillation you will assuredly repent, of decision, never. You may twine your affections round the reeds of earth, and build towering hopes upon the sand, and seek after worldly vanities as after hid treasure, but the end of these things is sure—disappointment and destruction. . And the end of a contrary conduct is sure also—glory, honour, immortality—all comprised in one weighty expression—eternal life! May God, who is, I trust, beginning a good work in you, bless and keep you by the glorious working of his effectual Spirit!

JEWSEBURY.

THE INFANT'S DREAM.

O CRADLE me on thy knee, mamma,
 And sing me the holy strain
 That soothed me last, as you fondly press'd
 My glowing cheek to your soft white breast;
 For I saw a scene, when I slumber'd last,
 That I fain would see again, mamma,
 That I fain would see again.

And smile as you then did smile, mamma,
 And weep as you then did weep;
 Then fix on me thy glistening eye,
 And gaze, and gaze, till the tear be dry;
 Then rock me gently, and sing, and sigh,
 Till you lull me fast asleep, mamma,
 Till you lull me fast asleep.

For I dreamed a heavenly dream, mamma,
 While slumbering on thy knee,
 And I lived in a land where forms divine,
 In kingdoms of glory eternally shine:
 And the world I would give, if the world were mine;
 Again that land to see, mamma,
 Again that land to see.

I fancied we roamed in a wood, mamma,
 And we rested us under a bough;
 When near me a butterfly flaunted in pride,
 And I chased it away through the forest wide;
 But the night came on—I had lost my guide,
 And I knew not what to do, mamma,
 And I knew not what to do.

My heart grew sick with fear, mamma,
 And loudly I wept for thee ;
 But a white robed maiden appeared in the air,
 And she flung back the curls of her golden hair,
 And she kissed me softly ere I was aware,
 Saying " Come, pretty babe, with me," mamma,
 Saying " Come, pretty babe, with me."

My tears and fears she quelled, mamma,
 And she led me far away ;
 We entered the door of a dark, dark tomb,
 And we passed through a long, long vault of gloom ;
 Then opened our eyes in a land of bloom,
 And a sky of endless day, mamma,
 And a sky of endless day.

And heavenly forms were there, mamma,
 And lovely cherubs bright :
 They smiled when they saw me ; but I was amazed ;
 And, wondering around me, gazed and gazed ;
 While songs were heard, and sunny robes blazed,
 All glorious in the land of light, mamma,
 All glorious in the land of light.

But soon came a shining throng, mamma,
 Of white robed babes to me ;
 Their eyes looked love, and their sweet lips smiled,
 For they marvelled to meet with an earth-born child,
 For they gloried that I from the earth was exiled,
 Saying " Here ever blessed shalt thou be,
 pretty babe,"
 Saying " Here ever blessed shalt thou be."

Then I mixed with the heavenly throng, mamma,
 With cherubim and seraphim fair ;
 And I saw, as I roamed in the regions of peace,
 The spirits who had fled from the world of distress,
 And theirs were the joys no tongue can express ;
 For they knew no sorrow there, mamma,
 For they knew no sorrow there.

Do you mind when sister Jane, mamma,
 Lay dead—short time gone ;
 And you gazed on the sad but lovely wreck,
 With a full flood of woe that you could not check,
 And your heart was so sore, that you wished it would
 break,
 But it lived, and your eye sobbed on, mamma,
 But it lived, and your eye sobbed on.

But oh ! had you been with me, mamma,
 In the realms unknown to care,
 And seen what I saw, you ne'er had cried,
 Though they buried pretty Jane in the grave when
 she died ;
 For, shining with the blest, and adorned like a bride,
 My sister Jane was there, mamma,
 Sweet sister Jane was there.

Do you mind of the silly old man, mamma,
 Who came late, late, to our door,
 When the night was dark, and the tempest loud :
 Oh ! his heart was meek, but his soul was proud ;
 And his ragged old mantle served for his shroud,
 Ere the midnight watch was o'er mamma,
 Ere the midnight watch was o'er.

And think what a weight of wee, mamma,
 Made heavy each long-drawn sigh,
 As the good man sat on papa's old chair,
 While the rain dropped down from his thin grey hair,
 As fast as the big tear of speechless care,
 Ran down from his glazing eye, mamma,
 Ran down from his glazing eye.

And think what a heaven-ward look, mamma,
 Flashed through each trembling tear,
 As he told how he went to the Baron's strong hold—
 Saying "Oh let me in, for the night is cold:"
 But the rich man cried "Go, sleep in the wold;
 " For we shield no beggars here, old man,
 " For we shield no beggars here."

Well, he was in glory too, mamma,
 As happy as the blest can be:
 He needed no alms in the mansions of light,
 For he mixed with the Patriarchs clothed in white,
 And there was not a seraph had a crown more bright,
 Or a costlier robe than he, mamma,
 Or a costlier robe than he.

Now sing, for I fain would sleep, mamma,
 And dream as I dreamed before;
 For sound was my slumber, and sweet was my rest,
 While my spirit in the kingdom of light was a guest;
 And the heart that has throbb'd in the climes of the
 blest,
 Can love this world no more, mamma,
 Can love this world no more.

“IT IS GOOD TO BE HERE.”

METHINKS it is good to be here,
If thou wilt, let us build—but for whom ?
Nor Elias, nor Moses appear,
But the shadows of eve that encompass the gloom,
The abode of the dead, and the place of the tomb.

Shall we build to Ambition ? Ah ! no ;
Affrighted he shrinketh away ;
For see ! they would pin him below
To a small narrow cave, and begirt with cold clay,
To the meanest of reptiles a peer and a prey.

To Beauty ? Ah ! no ; she forgets
The charms which she wielded before :
Nor knows the foul worm that he frets
The skin which, but yesterday, fools could adore
For the smoothness it held, or the tint which it wore.

Shall we build to the purple of Pride,
The trappings which dizen the proud ?
Alas ! they are all laid aside,
And here's neither dress nor adornment allow'd,
But the long winding sheet and the fringe of the shroud.

To Riches ? Alas ! 'tis in vain,
Who hid in their turns have been hid ;
The treasures are squander'd again ;
And here in the grave are all metals forbid,
But the tinsel that shone on the dark coffin lid.

To the Pleasures which mirth can afford,
The revel, the laugh, and the jeer ?

Ah ! here is a plentiful board,
But the guests are all mute as their pitiful cheer,
And none but the worm is a reveller here.

Shall we build to Affection and Love ?
Ah ! no ; they have wither'd and died,
Or fled with the spirit above,—
Friends, brothers, and sisters are laid side by side,
Yet none have saluted, and none have replied.

Unto Sorrow ? the dead cannot grieve,
Not a sob, not a sigh meets mine ear,
Which compassion itself could believe ;
Ah ! sweetly they slumber, nor hope, love or fear ;
Peace, peace, is the watchword, the only one here.

Unto Death, to whom monarchs must bow ?
Ah ! no ; for his empire is known,
And here there are trophies enow ;
Beneath the cold dead, and around the dark stone,
Are the signs of a sceptre that none may disown.

The first tabernacle to Hope we will build,
And look for the sleepers around us to rise ;
The second to Faith, which ensures it fulfill'd ;
And the third to the Lamb of the great sacrifice,
Who bequeath'd us them both when He rose to the
skies.

H. KNOWLES.

EXEMPLIFICATION OF THE WAY IN WHICH NATURAL RELIGION BEARS UPON CHRIS- TIANITY.

THE most important exemplification of the way in which natural religion bears upon Christianity, is furnished by the question of a sinner's acceptance with God. Natural religion can suggest to man the apprehension of his guilt; for however dim her objective view of the Deity, there is no such dimness in her ethical notion of what is due even to an uncertain God. Without having seriously resolved the question, we may stand convicted to our own minds of a hardened and habitual carelessness of the question. If our whole lives long have been spent in the midst of created things, without any serious or sustained effort of our spirits in quest of a Creator—if, as our consciences can tell, the whole drift and practical earnestness of our thoughts are towards the gifts, with but a rare and occasional anxiety towards the Giver—if the sense of Him touch but lightly on our spirits, and we, by our perpetual lapses from the sacred to the secular, prove that our gravitation is to earth, and that in truth our best-loved element is atheism—if the notices of a God, however indistinct wherewith we are surrounded, instead of fastening our regards on this high contemplation, do but disturb without at all influencing the general tenor of our engagements—these are things of which the light of Nature can take cognizance; and these are things because of which, and of their felt unworthiness, nature is visited by the misgivings both of remorse and of terror. She has data enough on which to found the demonstration and the sense of her own unworthiness; and hence a general feeling of insecurity

among all spirits, a secret but strong apprehension that all is not right between them and God.

This is not a matter of mere sensitive and popular impression ; but in strict accordance with the views of a calm and intelligent jurisprudence. It enters into the very essence of our conception of a moral government, that it must have sanctions—which could not have place, were there either to be no dispensation of rewards and punishments ; or were the penalties, though denounced with all the parade and proclamation of law, to be never executed. It is not the lesson of conscience, that God would, under the mere impulse of a parental fondness for the creatures whom He had made, let down the high state and sovereignty which belong to Him ; or that He would forbear the infliction of the penalty, because of any soft or timid shrinking from the pain it would give to the objects of His displeasure. There is nothing either in history or nature, which countenances such an imagination of the Deity, as that, in the relents of mere tenderness, He would stoop to any weak or unworthy compromise with guilt. The actual sufferings of life speak loudly and experimentally against the supposition ; and when one looks to the disease and the agony of spirit, and above all the hideous and unsparing death, with its painful struggles and gloomy forebodings, which are spread universally over the face of the earth—we cannot but imagine of the God who presides over such an economy, that He is not a being who will falter from the imposition of any severity, which might serve the objects of a high administration. Else all steadfastness of purpose, and steadfastness of principle were fallen from. God would stand forth to the eye of His own creatures, a spectacle of outraged dignity. And He of whom we image that He dwells in an unviolable sanc-

tuary, the august monarch of heaven and earth—with a law by subjects dishonoured, by the sovereign unavenged—would possess but the semblance and the mockery of a throne.

Such a conception is not only a violence to the apprehensions of nature, but is even acknowledged at times by our academic theists, as a violence to the sound philosophy of the subject. The most striking testimony to this effect is that given by Dr. Adam Smith, on the first appearance of his “*Theory of Moral Sentiments* ;” nor does it detract from its interest or its value, that he afterwards suppressed it, in the subsequent editions of his work.—“All our natural sentiments,” he says, “prompt us to believe, that as perfect virtue is supposed necessarily to appear to the Deity as it does to us, as for its own sake and without any further view, the natural and proper object of love and reward, so must vice of hatred and punishment. That the gods neither resent nor hurt was the general maxim of all the different sects of the ancient philosophy ; and if by resenting, be understood that violent and disorderly perturbation which often distracts and confounds the human heart ; or if by hurting, be understood the doing of mischief wantonly, and without regard to propriety or justice, such weakness is undoubtedly unworthy of the divine perfection. But if it be meant that vice does not appear to the Deity to be for its own sake the object of abhorrence and aversion, and what for its own sake, it is fit and reasonable should be punished, the truth of this maxim can by no means be so easily admitted. If we consult our natural sentiments we are apt to fear lest before the holiness of God, vice should appear to be more worthy of punishment, than the weakness and imperfection of human virtue can ever seem to be of reward. Man when about to appear

before a Being of infinite perfection, can feel but little confidence in his own merit, or in the imperfect propriety of his own conduct. In the presence of his fellow creatures he may often justly elevate himself, and may often have reason to think highly of his own character and conduct, compared to the still greater imperfection of theirs. But the case is quite different, when about to appear before his infinite Creator. To such a Being, he can scarcely imagine, that his littleness and weakness should ever appear to be the proper objects either of esteem or of reward. But he can easily conceive how the numberless violations of duty, of which he has been guilty, should render him the proper object of aversion and punishment; neither can he see any reason why the divine indignation should not be let loose, without any restraint, upon so vile an insect as he is sensible that he himself must appear to be. If he would still hope for happiness, he is conscious that he cannot demand it from the justice; but he must entreat it from the mercy of God. Repentance, sorrow, humiliation, contrition at the thought of his past misconduct, are upon this account the sentiments which become him, and seem to be the only means which he has left, for appeasing that wrath which he knows he has justly provoked. He even distrusts the efficacy of all these, and naturally fears lest the wisdom of God should not, like the weakness of man, be prevailed upon to spare the crime by the most importunate lamentations of the criminal. Some other intercession, some other sacrifice, some other atonement, he imagines must be made for him, beyond what he himself is capable of making, before the purity of the divine justice can be reconciled to his manifold offences. The doctrines of revelation coincide in every respect with these original anticipations of

nature ; and as they teach us how little we can depend upon the imperfection of our own virtue, so they show us at the same time that the most powerful intercession has been made, and that the most dreadful atonement has been paid, for our manifold transgressions and iniquities."

This interesting passage seems to have been written by its author, under a true apprehension of that dilemma, in which the world is involved. He admits a moral government on the part of God. He admits a universal delinquency on the part of man. And his feeling is, that the government would be nullified by a mere act of indemnity, which rendered no acknowledgment to the justice which had been violated, or to the authority of that law which had been trampled on. In these circumstances, he casts about as it were for an adjustment; and puts forth a conjectural speculation; and guesses what the provision should be, which, under a new economy, might be adopted for repairing a defect, that is evidently beyond all the resources of natural theism; and proposes the very expedient of our profest revelation, for the resolving of a difficulty which had been else impracticable. We deem it a melancholy fact, that this noble testimony to the need of a gospel, should have disappeared in the posterior editions of his work—revised and corrected as they were by his own hand. It is not for men to sit in the chair of judgment; and never should they feel a greater awe or tenderness upon their spirits, than when called to witness or to pronounce upon the aberrations of departed genius. Yet when one compares the passage he could at one time have written, with the memoir that, after an interval of many years, he gave to the world of David Hume, that ablest champion of the infidel cause—one fears lest, under the con-

tagion of a near and withering intimacy with him, his spirit may have imbibed of the kindred poison; and he at length have become ashamed, of the homage that he once had rendered to the worth and importance of Christianity.

This notwithstanding remains one of the finest examples of the way, in which the Natural bears upon the Christian theology; and of the outgoings, by which, the one conducts to a landing-place in the other. We hold that there are many such outgoings; that at the uttermost margin of the former there is a felt want, and that in accurate counterpart to this, the latter has something to offer in precise and perfect adaptation thereto. Now the great error of our academic theism, as commonly treated, is that it expresses no want; that it reposes in its own fancied sufficiency; and all its landing-places are within itself, and along the uttermost limits of its own territory. It is no reproach against our philosophical moralists, that they have not stepped beyond the threshold of that peculium, which is strictly and appropriately theirs; or not made incursion into another department than their own. The legitimate complaint is, that, on taking leave of their disciples, they warn them not, of their being only yet at the outset or in the prosecution of a journey, instead of having reached the termination of it. They in fact take leave of them, in the middle of an unprotected highway—when they should have reared a finger-post of direction to the places which lie beyond. The paragraph which we have now extracted, was just such a finger-post—though taken down, we deeply regret to say, by the very hand that had erected it. Our veneration for his name must not restrain the observation, that, by this, he undid the best service which a professor of moral science can

render to humanity. Along the confines of its domain, there should be raised, in every quarter, the floating signals of distress, that its scholars, instead of being lulled into the imagination that now they may repose as in so many secure and splendid dwelling places, should be taught to regard them only as towers of observation—whence they have to look for their ulterior guidance and their ulterior supplies, to the region of a conterminous theology.

There is a difficulty here in the theism of nature, within the whole compass of which, no solution for it can be found. It will at least afford a specimen of the way in which the one bears upon the other, if we state the method of escape from this difficulty that has been provided in the theism of Christianity. The great moral problem which under the former waits to be resolved, is to find acceptance in the mercy of God, for those who have braved His justice, and done despite to the authority of His law; and that without any compromise of truth or dignity. By the offered solution of the New Testament, a channel has been opened up, through a high mediatorship between God and man, for the descent of a grace and a mercy the most exuberant on a guilty world; and through it, the overtures of reconciliation are extended unto all; and a sceptre of forgiveness, but of forgiveness consecrated by the blood of a great atonement, has been stretched forth, even to the most polluted and worthless outcasts of the human family; and thus the goodness of the divinity obtained its fullest vindication, yet not a goodness at the expense of justice—for the affront done to an outraged law, has been amply repaired by the homage to its authority of an illustrious sufferer, who took upon himself the burden of all those penalties which we should have borne; and, in the

spectacle of whose deep, and mysterious sacrifice, God's hatred of moral evil stands forth in most impressive demonstration. So that, instead of a conflict or a concussion between these two essential attributes of His nature, a way has been found, by which each is enhanced to the uttermost, and a flood of most copious and convincing illustration has been poured upon them both.

CHALMERS.

THE WORLD IN THE HEART.

ARE there not portions of the sacred word,
 So often preach'd and quoted, read and heard,
 That, though of deepest import, and design'd
 With joy or fear to penetrate the mind,
 They pass away with notice cold and brief,
 Like drops of rain upon a glossy leaf?
 Such is the final sentence, on that day,
 When all distinctions shall be done away
 But what the righteous Judge shall bring to light,
 Between the left-hand millions and the right.
 Here in his word, in beams of light, it stands,
 What will be then demanded at our hands;
 Clear and unclouded now the page appears,
 As even then illumed by blazing spheres.

— The question is not, if our earthly race
 Was once enlightened by a flash of grace;
 If we sustained a place on Zion's hill,
 And call'd him Lord,—but if we did his will.
 What if the stranger sick and captive lie,
 Naked and hungry, and we pass them by!

Or do but some extorted pittance throw,
 To save our credit, not to ease their woe !
 Or strangers to the charity whence springs
 The liberal heart devising liberal things,
 We, cumber'd ever with our own pursuits,
 To others leave the labour and its fruits ;
 Pleading excuses for the crumb we save,
 For want of faith to cast it on the wave !
 —Shall we go forth with joy to meet our Lord,
 Enter his kingdom, reap the full reward ?
 —Can such his good, his faithful servants be,
 Blest of the Father ?—Read his word and see.

What if, in strange defiance of that rule,
 Made not in *Moses'* but the *Gospel* school,
 Shining as clearly as the light of heaven,
 “They who forgive not, shall not be forgiven.”
 We live in anger, hatred, envy, strife,
 Still firmly hoping for eternal life ;
 And where the streams of Christian love should flow,
 The root of bitterness is left to grow ;
 Resisting evil, indisposed to brook
 A word of insult or a scornful look ;
 And speak the language of the world in all
 Except the challenge and the leaden ball !

What if, mistrustful of its latent worth,
 We hide our single talent in the earth !
 And what if self is pamper'd, not denied !
 What if the flesh is never crucified !
 What if the world be hidden in the heart,—
 Will it be “*Come, ye blessed !*” or “*Depart !*”

Who then shall conquer ? who maintain the fight ?
 Even they that walk by faith and not by sight ;
 Who, having wash'd their robes and made them white,

Press tow'ards the mark, and see the promised land,
 Not dim and distantly, but near at hand.
 —We are but marching down a sloping hill,
 Without a moment's time for standing still;
 Where every step accelerates the pace,
 More and more rapid till we reach the base;
 And then, no clinging to the yielding dust!
 An ocean rolls below, and plunge we must.
 What plainer language labours to express,
 Thus metaphoric is allow'd to dress;
 And this but serves on naked truth to throw
 That hazy, indistinct, and distant glow,
 Through which we wish the future to appear,
 Not as it is indeed—true, awful, near.

And yet, amid the hurry, toil and strife,
 The claims, the urgencies, the whirl of life,—
 The soul—perhaps in silence of the night—
 Has flashes—transient intervals of light;
 When things to come, without a shade of doubt,
 In terrible reality stand out.
 Those lucid moments suddenly present
 A glance of truth, as though the heavens were rent;
 And through the chasm of pure celestial light,
 The future breaks upon the startled sight;
 Life's vain pursuits, and Time's advancing pace,
 Appear, with death-bed clearness, face to face;
 And Immortality's expanse sublime,
 In just proportion to the speck of time:
 While Death, uprising from the silent shades,
 Shows his dark outline ere the vision fades;
 In strong relief against the blazing sky,
 Appears the shadow as it passes by:
 And, though o'erwhelming to the dazzled brain,
These are the moments when the mind is sane;

For then a hope of heaven, a Saviour's cross,
 Seem what they are, and all things else but loss.
 Oh! to be ready—ready for that day,
 Would we not give earth's fairest toys away?
 Alas! how soon its interests cloud the view,
 Rush in, and plunge us in the world anew.

The quiet chamber where the Christian sleeps,
 And where from year to year he prays and weeps;
 Whence, in the midnight watch his thoughts arise
 To those bright mansions where his treasure lies,
 —How near it is to all that Faith can see!
 How short and peaceful may his passage be!
 One beating pulse,—one feeble struggle o'er,
 May open wide the everlasting door.
 Yes, for that bliss unspeakable, unseen,
 Is ready, and the veil of flesh between
 A gentle sigh may rend,—and then display
 The broad full splendour of an endless day.
 —This bright conviction elevates his mind;
 He presses forward, leaving all behind:
 Thus from his throne the tyrant foe is hurl'd,
 —This is the faith that overcomes the world.

JANE TAYLOR.

WAR.

“BLESSED are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:” (Matt. v. 3). By which poorness of spirit is to be understood a disposition of mind, meek, humble, submissive to power, void of ambition, patient of injuries, and free from all resentment. This was so new, and so opposite to the ideas of all Pagan moralists,

that they thought this temper of mind a criminal and contemptible meanness, which must induce men to sacrifice the glory of their country, and their own honour, to a shameful pusillanimity; and such it appears to almost all who are called Christians even at this day, who not only reject it in practice, but disavow it in principle, notwithstanding this explicit declaration of their Master. We see them revenging the smallest affronts by premeditated murder, as individuals, on principles of honour; and, in their national capacities, destroying each other with fire and sword, for the low considerations of commercial interests, the balance of rival powers, or the ambition of princes. We see them with their last breath animating each other to a savage revenge, and, in the agonies of death, plunging with feeble arms their daggers into the hearts of their opponents: and, what is still worse, we hear all these barbarisms celebrated by historians, flattered by poets, applauded in theatres, approved in senates, and even sanctified in pulpits. But universal practice cannot alter the nature of things, nor universal error change the nature of truth. Pride was not made for man, but humility, meekness, and resignation; that is poorness of spirit, was made for man, and properly belongs to his dependent and precarious situation; and is the only disposition of mind, which can enable him to enjoy ease and quiet here, and happiness hereafter. Yet was this important precept entirely unknown, until it was promulgated by him, who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven: Verily I say unto you, whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." (Matt. x. 14.)

Another precept, equally new and no less excellent,

is forgiveness of injuries : “ Ye have heard,” says Christ to his disciples, “ Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy ; but I say unto you, love your enemies ; bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matt. v. 43.) This was a lesson so new, and so utterly unknown, until taught by his doctrines, and enforced by his example, that the wisest moralists of the wisest nations and ages represented the desire of revenge as a mark of a noble mind, and the accomplishment of it as one of the chief felicities attendant on a fortunate man. But how much more magnanimous, how much more beneficial to mankind, is forgiveness ! it is more magnanimous, because every generous and exalted disposition of the human mind is requisite to the practice of it : for these alone can enable us to bear the wrongs and insults of wickedness and folly with patience, and to look down on the perpetrators of them with pity, rather than indignation ; these alone can teach us, that such are but a part of those sufferings allotted to us in this state of probation, and to know, that to overcome evil with good, is the most glorious of all victories : it is the most beneficial, because this amiable conduct alone can put an end to an eternal succession of injuries and retaliations ; for every retaliation becomes a new injury, and requires another act of revenge for satisfaction. But would we observe this salutary precept, to love our enemies, and to do good to those who despitefully use us, this obstinate benevolence would at last conquer the most inveterate hearts, and we should have no enemies to forgive. How much more exalted a character therefore is a Christian martyr, suffering with resignation, and praying for the guilty, than that of a Pagan hero,

breathing revenge, and destroying the innocent! Yet noble, and useful as this virtue is, before the appearance of this religion it was not only unpractised, but decried in principle as mean and ignominious, though so obvious a remedy for most of the miseries of this life, and so necessary a qualification for the happiness of another.

SOAME JENYNS.

RACHEL.—A TRUE STORY.

The following affecting incident was communicated to the Author during his residence at Rome; and since he returned, confirmation of the fact has appeared from several quarters. Nothing is added in the Poem to the real Narrative: the simple truth has been adhered to throughout.

WHERE rolls Ohio's widening wave
Through wa-tes of pathless wood,
A lone majestic mansion gave
Its shadow o'er the flood.

Bright was the roof, when morning smil'd,
And woke the sleeping gale:
Grey rose the walls, when evening mild
Let fall her starry veil.

A stranger chose the wild retreat,
And there assayed to find,
If ought in solitude were sweet
To soothe an aching mind.

He lov'd the lofty cliff to climb ;
 Or saunter hours away,
 Where headlong cataracts sublime
 Bounded in sheets of spray.

From crag to crag, and rock to rock,
 Lost in the yawn below ;
 While groves that trembled at the shock,
 Frown'd o'er their foaming snow !

He thought he might in Nature trace
 The *whole* of Nature's God ;
 Yet ne'er had known the Saviour's face,
 Who bought him with his blood :

For he was one of Judah's tribe,
 The Lord of Life who slew ;
 Nor wealth could win, nor beauty bribe,
 The worship of the Jew.

His heart ador'd an only child
 Bright as the morning flower,
 Whose mother faded e'er she smil'd—
 The parent of an hour;

Yet this sweet gage of love was left,
 And grew a matchless maid ;
 For oft in her the sire bereft,
 Beheld her mother's shade.

Her form was moulded as her mind,
 And that like heav'n was fair ;
 Yet nought of this *her* heart divin'd,
 Nor knew a charm was there.

As silvery clouds at eventide
 Float on the balmy gale,
 Nor seem to heed the stars they hide
 Behind their fleecy veil;

So modest sense of humble worth,
 Fresh beauties o'er her threw;
 For she least conscious seem'd on earth
 Of all the praise she drew.

Now thrice five years, with silent flight,
 Unmark'd had pass'd away,
 When, lo! a ray of heav'nly light
 Turn'd darkness into day.

For all the forms that beauty gilds,
 Shall fade, and die, and cease;
 And 'tis the heart, when chang'd that yields
 The fruits of joy and peace.

She heard a Saviour's name, and felt
 That all beside was dross;
 Then wash'd her soul, and left its guilt
 Suspended on his cross.

'Twas well; for now Consumption's worm
 Had lush'd her warbling lay,
 Wither'd the freshness of her form,
 And snatch'd its bloom away.

Yet oft a feverish hectic flush
 Its silent sign betray'd,
 Like roses o'er a tomb that blush
 And mock the grave they shade.

One evening, when the dart of death
 Seem'd pointed at her breast,
 His Rachel, ere had ceas'd her breath,
 Her father thus address'd!—

“My father! dost thou love me now?”
 And while the sufferer spake,
 A gathering cloud o'ercast his brow,
 As if his heart would break.

“Say, dost thou love me?”—deep he sigh'd,
 Then wept and sigh'd again;
 For grief had like a torrent's tide
 Gulph'd him in speechless pain.

And yet, once more, like Peter's Lord,
 Whom Peter thrice denied,
 A third time she pronounc'd the word;
 A third time, thus applied—

“Forgive me, father, dost thou love
 Me, thine unworthy child?”
 Amazement chok'd his voice, and drove
 His soul with anguish wild:

Till words a channel found, and flow'd,
 Oppress'd with rising tears—
 “For thee,” he cried, “my all bestow'd
 Too small a price appears.

“Ask what thou wilt: thy last request
 I never can deny!”
 The promise seem'd to soothe her breast,
 And won her meek reply.—

“Dark is the hour of death to those
 Who feel no Saviour near :
 His smile alone affords repose,
 And dries the latest tear.

“His name is JESUS ? and He died
 Upon the Cross for you :
 The God—the Man—the Crucified—
 For Gentile and for Jew.

“And oh ! my father, give that love
 Thou hast afforded me,
 To him who intercedes above
 And gave his blood for thee !

“I know but little ; yet that word,
Jesus, to me is sweet :
 I go to call this Saviour, Lord,
 And worship at his feet.

“So shall we meet, when time is o’er,
 In his eternal home ;
 That blissful and celestial shore,
 Where parting ne’er shall come !”

Her voice had fail’d ; yet still her tongue
 Faulter’d the holy name,
 Until she join’d the glorious song
 Of Moses and the Lamb !

Her father too, ere long, shall reach
 The sacred choirs above :
 For grace, which every heart can teach
 Has chang’d the Jew’s to love.

No more he sighs, because bereav'd
 Of her he soon shall see :
 But joys to have at last receiv'd
 The faith of Calvary !

MATTHEW BRIDGES.

THE IMAGE OF HIS CREATOR IN MAN.

THIS beautiful image has been long since shivered and disfigured; but its *fragments* remain to testify that it once existed. There is in the hearts of men a testimony that they shall live for ever; a voice that echoes through futurity; a sense that they shall see strange things in another world; thoughts that wander through eternity, and find no resting place. This is a fragment of God's image, a shattered remnant of his immortality, and it is there to testify against us; for if it had been perfect, nothing would be more delightful than to think that we should live for ever; to look forward into brighter scenes, and rejoice in the glory that should be revealed. All the gold of Arabia would not be worth one hour's excursion of the mind of man into the regions of futurity. For ever and for ever would his mind be reaching forward, and dwelling with fondness upon the thought, that never, from age to age, when time should be no more, should he cease from being. The pleasures of the spirits that walk to and fro in the light of God's countenance, and circle his throne rejoicing, would crowd his fancy and delight his hopes. Visions of celestial happiness would visit him in dreams of the night, and, compared with the dim and distant perspective of eternity, all earthly things would seem "weary, stale, flat, and un-

profitable." And what is the fact? Let every man judge himself how his natural heart shrinks from the contemplation of a future state of being; how he shudders to look into eternity, as into some dreary and bottomless pit. What a cold and dismal thing does immortality appear; and what a refreshment it is to his spirits to withdraw his thoughts from the consideration, and return to his beloved earth! And then, only observe with what eagerness and desperation he gives up soul and body to the pursuit of things which he knows full well will soon be to him as if they had never been. And yet, this man, if you were to ask him the question, would tell you, that he expected to live for ever; and that when his body was mouldering in the dust from which it was taken, his soul would plunge into an ocean of spirits without bottom and without shore. This he would tell you gravely as a matter of course. And then only observe him from week to week, or for one day, or for *this* day, which has been sanctified to immortal purposes, and you will find his cares, his hopes, his fears, his wishes, his affections, busied and bustling about this little span of earth, and this little measure of time which he occupies: and death finds this immortal being making playthings of sand, and carries him away from them all, into a land where they shall all be forgotten. This is a strange and astonishing contradiction,—the only thing that looks like a blunder through all the works of nature.—Every thing else seems to know its appointed time and its appointed place: the sun knows his place in the heavens, he does his duty in the firmament, and brings round the seasons in their order, and the ocean knows the boundaries beyond which it must not dare to pass;—every animal knows the home that kind nature has provided—"the ox knoweth his

owner, and the ass his master's crib : but Israel doth not know ; my people doth not consider." Among all the creatures that surround us, *we* are the only beings that look not to our native home ; the only beings that seem to have broken the laws of nature ; to have forgotten our owner, and the mansions of our Father's house. This naked expectation of immortality, while we see no beauty in it, that we should desire it—while we are feeding on ashes, and have lost our relish for immortal food—is one of the fragments of God's image ; it shows that it once existed, and that it now is broken.

But look again, and observe all the astonishing faculties of man ; his reason, his memory, his imagination. Observe only how he can, as it were, take knowledge by violence, how he can lock it up in his memory, and keep it in store for his use ; with what quickness and ingenuity he can invent and contrive ; with what judgment he can weigh, and deliberate, and decide ; how he can *extort* nature's secrets, how he can penetrate into the distant works of God, and inform when the sun shall be darkened, and when the moon shall refuse to give her light.

Consider all these astonishing faculties, worthy of the master-piece of God, and then look at the brutal and abominable passions that blacken and deface his soul ; look at this same immortal creature, beautified with all the gifts of the Almighty, blotting out the very understanding with which he has been glorified, by a drunkenness of which brutes are incapable ; nay, sometimes "glorying in his shame," and boasting of having thus spoiled the good work of God ! Observe him next, inflamed with lust, and plunged into profligacy and debauchery, and making the eternal soul, that has been armed with such glorious faculties, the servant and slave

of his perishable body. Observe him rioting in hatred, malignity, and revenge, and admitting the dark passions of an evil spirit into the soul that the Almighty had made to be an habitation for himself.

Measure now this creature with himself; the wonderful powers of his mind, the grasp of his memory, the lightning of his invention, with the depravity of which the beast of the field is incapable; the impurity that brings his soul into bondage to his body, the malice and revenge that make him an abode of the spirit of darkness. Truly "the wild beasts are in our ruins, and the dragons are in our pleasant places." These are fragments of an image that was beautiful; enough to shew that it once existed, and that now it is broken.

And amongst these ruins there is a *voice* sometimes heard, like the spirit of a departed inhabitant, unwilling to leave even the ruins of the palace which he once had occupied; a voice that "reasons of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come;" that sometimes catches the ear in the momentary stillness of the day, and still more in the dead of the night, before deep sleep falleth upon men; but, like the murmurs of a ghost, men cannot bear to listen to it, but hurry out of its reach. And thus does conscience sometimes remind us of former days, of hours of sin, of *time* squandered away that can never be recovered, of an impure heart, of a worldly and carnal mind, and proves that it is a remnant of God; for it tells us, "that for all these things, God will bring us into judgment."

But, alas! it does no more than *reproach* and *condemn*; for, alas! it cannot *change* an old heart; it cannot "create a new spirit within us;" it cannot raise our affections from the dust upon which we are treading; it cannot fill us with heavenly dispositions; it cannot make

us look forward with delight to scenes of future glory. Alas! this is beyond the power of conscience; it serves to *reproach*, but cannot *restore*;—it is but a GHOST among the ruins,—but a voice among the tombs; it is a poor remnant of what once was a living image of the Almighty; enough to shew that it once existed, and that now it is broken.

But again, observe him gifted with the power of speech, the power of communicating thought for thought, and circulating knowledge, and truth, and love through all his fellow-creatures. Just conceive for one moment what he would be without it; how black, how ignorant, how dreary, how comfortless!—where would then be mutual assistance, mutual advice, the communication of knowledge, the interchange of affection? Observe man, the only created being endowed with this glorious faculty, and then consider the use that he has made of it. Listen to the curses and the blasphemy against the very Being who bestowed it, who gave it, that it might rise before the throne 'in hallelujahs. Then hear the falsehood, the deceit, the prevarication issuing through the channel where truth should for ever flow; then hear the impure and wanton jest, that circulates poison, and nurses and assists the natural corruption of the heart, when (God knows!) it has enough to corrupt and brutalise it within; then listen to the scandal, the malice, the invective, and the recrimination, upon the tongue to which God gave the eloquence of affection and benevolence, and the music of pity and consolation; then attend to the lips that can be eloquent and voluble on every subject but one,—that can descant on the market and its prices, on the world and its fashions and its politics, nay, on every little impulse of the feelings, and every fine-spun sentiment of the mind; but if the great God

intrudes into conversation, his ways or his dispensations, his mercies and his loving-kindnesses, the tide begins to ebb, the glow of society dies away, and the cold and heartless silence betrays that an unwelcome stranger has made his appearance. Truly this is a magnificent *fragment* of that illustrious image; enough to shew that it once existed, and that now it is shivered and broken.

WOLFE.

ON SCEPTICAL LEVITY IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

I WOULD affectionately warn young men of the dangers which attend a sceptical temper of mind. At no time have we more reason than at present to dread the desolating effects of such a tendency, and to lift up a warning voice against it. We live in an age of light and of science, and of great mental improvement. Intellect has made, and is making, rapid advances. Science is no longer confined to a privileged few. Its gates are opened to the admission of all; and our schools of arts, and our institutions of philosophy, and our universities of varied and expansive literature, are severally preferring their claims with unexampled zeal and with astonishing success. Do we deplore? Do we hold that ignorance is essential to civil obedience? or that in the things of God it is the mother of devotion? Far from it. We can never regret the zeal with which the gifts of God are improved by man; nor do we cherish any suspicion lest too much intellect should be embarked in the scale of pity. Our fear is, lest knowledge should be separated from religion; and we know not a more dangerous

weapon in the hands of a fallen creature than unsanctified knowledge. Our anxiety is, lest the religious improvement of the age should not keep pace with its improvement in science; and hence the hazard to which young minds are exposed, when set afloat on the tide of speculation without the regulating compass of enlightened and steady principle.

After all, we have perhaps more to fear from the grossness of vulgar infidelity than from the speculative scepticism of science. By no feature has the aspect of our times been more painfully characterised than by the bold and reckless hostility of ungodly men to all the sacredness and all the purity of the Gospel. Boasting of a freedom from ordinary prejudices, they are themselves the victims of a prejudice the most determined against the holy mysteries and the lofty precepts of revelation. And hence it is that in place of argument we have ridicule. Instead of cool and impartial reasoning, we have scoffs and jeers at religion and its ministers. Instead of a comprehensive and accurate survey of the whole matter, we have a few difficulties magnified into impossibilities; the suggestions of ignorance and presumption swelled into the discoveries of enlightened science; or the failings of Christian professors blazoned forth as irresistible conclusions against the truth of the system which they profess to embrace. Were men actuated by a sincere wish to discover the truth, it would become a matter of pleasant duty to give a profound attention to this objection, and to satisfy, if possible, their scruples. But we fear that the enemies with whom we have chiefly to deal, are, for the most part, "seated in the chair of the scornful;" and therefore it is, we warn the young against sceptical levity as altogether opposed to soberness of mind. Could we do

nothing more for Christianity than simply appeal to the host of great, and learned, and eminently worthy men, who, in all ages, have lived and died in the faith, and in the hope of it, this of itself should be sufficient to silence the scoffs of small wits in the present day; and we should deprecate that rash and unbecoming presumption which can treat with contempt, or even indifference, a scheme of doctrine which such mighty masters in science as Newton and Locke, and Bacon and Boyle, received and gloried in as “the pearl of great price.” But have we not a still surer ground of appeal in the uncontradicted miracles of the Saviour and his apostles;—in the train of connected prophecy most exactly fulfilled, and yet fulfilling before our eyes;—in the unexampled success which attended the labours of the fishermen of Galilee;—in the sublimity and purity of the apostolic doctrine;—in the great moral change which it has produced on the world;—and in the practical experience of its power and efficacy as displayed in the characters and lives of good men? In opposition to all this, and much more, shall the minds of young men be perverted by the poisonous breath of infidelity? and shall that be termed freedom of thinking, in which there seems to be no thinking at all? “Young men, we exhort you to be sober minded.” Take a calm and cool survey of the evidences of truth. Acquaint yourselves accurately with the whole scheme of revelation. Search the Scriptures diligently, comparing one part of them with another; and marking, as you go along, the proofs they exhibit of their divinity. Let your course of religious reading, and even of your general reading, be such as will furnish you with information that may satisfy your own minds, and enable you to satisfy the enquiries of others. Avoid the company and conversa-

tion of such as scoff at sacred things, and profane the name, and the day, and the ordinances of God. Prize the sacred season of Sabbath, as the most precious opportunity of at once enlarging your understandings and improving your hearts. "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," as the manner of too many is. Listen to the ministers of religion and modesty, and a desire of improvement. Devote the evenings of the Lord's day to religious reading, meditation on what you have heard, spiritual converse, and private devotion. Embrace the varied opportunities, which the Sabbath schools, the pastoral classes, and the congregational and school libraries present, for the enlargement of your knowledge. Seek the company and the fellowship of those who fear God, and who are sober and steady in their habits. Cherish a profound sense of the majesty of God and the grandeur of eternity. Thus will you be sobered in your views of things; and thus will you be enabled, by the agency of grace, to grow, "as trees planted by rivers of water, and which bring forth fruit in their season."

DR. R. BURNS.

WISDOM, DIVINE AND HUMAN.

IF we come to human wisdom and divine, we find them, so far from agreeing as such, opposed to each other both in principles and practice;—in origin as well as in fruits.

For we either admit that there is a wisdom which comes immediately from God, or we do not: If it be not admitted, there is an end of all argument, so far as

the rule and authority of Scripture, as a basis of reasoning, is concerned. If we admit it, we must believe, that this wisdom is of a very different nature from that which is earthly or natural, the product of human reason. And the distinction is proved by their fruits.

The one is short-sighted, vain, contentious, and presumptuous. It puffs up the mind, and produces a loftiness of deportment, which overlooks the unassuming characteristics of a better wisdom: The fruits of divine wisdom are meekness, gentleness, humility, peace, mercy, charity, and brotherly kindness.

Between such opposite fruits there can be no possible agreement. And we are told distinctly, the one is of earth and the other from above. Consequently, the increase of one is the decrease of the other. Now if it be argued, that such opposite kinds of wisdom are identified in their source, and differ only in degree; is it not easy to perceive that every manifestation of Divine truth will be in danger of being rejected, which does not come in the form of a *regular proposition*, or strike the mind with that clearness of outward evidence, which, we are told, every one is bound to receive, before he gives his assent?

For if the outward evidence seem weak, and the appearance mean, as did that of Christ to the Jews, the lordly powers of reason may be expected to dismiss the humble visitant with something like this declaration, "we will not have this man to rule over us." And, it is clear, if divine light should ever insinuate itself into the soul of man, by gentle approaches, without any ostentatious display, it must inevitably be withstood by these arrogant centinels, who thus constitute themselves watchmen duly authorised to challenge every unexpected intrusion, and to admit none but a special ambassador,

bearing his credentials in high state. Some have taught us to believe that the situation of mind best fitted to receive this heavenly visitation and to profit by it, is that of humble adoration, and meek dependence on the mercy of providence, in which the wisdom of man is laid prostrate in the presence of divine power; so that the mind is made willing to receive, as a free boon of grace, the smallest testimonial of the Almighty ruler's compassionate regard:—But, between this opinion and that previously stated, the difference is wide indeed.

From all that has been said, therefore, I think it must be evident, that the mind, when livingly and effectively employed in seeking divine truth, and appropriating it to true spiritual union, is placed in a situation very different from that in which it is thought to be best qualified to collect, arrange, and establish, the principles of speculative knowledge *of any kind*. Its powers are differently engaged, and the immediate effect of this knowledge is to fill the head, instead of adding true spiritual substance, which can alone produce the *fruit of righteousness in the meekness of wisdom*.

In the one case there appears to be more of intellectual passiveness than activity: In the other more of creaturely activity. Yet the mind itself is not wholly passive; for the spiritual senses are awakened and exercised in warm and living aspirations to the source of wisdom. It is only those active principles which would oppose the admission of this heavenly messenger into the mind that must be silenced. And human wisdom was never yet freely disposed to open the gate in submissive meekness to that wisdom which is from above. It is naturally too curious and inquisitive, and suspicious, and withal too self-important for such an office. For it is not the nature of this divine wisdom to make its entrance with

display and pomp and great assumption of authority. It comes in humility, and in humility must be received, or it quickly departs.

What man may attain by his own power, he claims as his own right; and is too apt to look upon the faculties by which he makes discoveries and ascertains physical and moral laws, in their exercise at least, as if they were independent of his Maker. But if the grace and spirit of God be a *free gift*,—an unconstrained illumination which is vouchsafed according to certain dispositions in the moral agent,—a fact we must believe, if we believe the Scripture, then it is impossible for man to attain it by his own power and to claim it as his own right. For the sum of all his learning, even if it were to consist of unmixed speculative truth in divine mysteries, could amount to no more than this; that he had a knowledge of his duties, of the object of his being, of his Maker's attributes, and of some of the revealed glories of the heavenly kingdom, of his natural infirmities, and of the divine assistance on certain conditions being freely offered him. After the attainment of all this knowledge, it would still be incumbent upon him to put so much of it as concerned him in practice, to the very letter, in his own individual experience, and to exhibit, in "the meekness of wisdom," the *fruits* of peace and righteousness.

It is therefore a high attainment of reason to know that it is not by arguments, however clear and just, and unanswerably deduced, that man can succeed in reaching heaven. Though reason may teach him to know the way, he must tread the path by another guide. A man may study the principles of navigation in his closet, he may know the latitude of different places, and the course he ought to steer, and after much traverse sailing, be pre-

pared to find his exact situation. But when launched on the ocean, if he does not keep an ever-watchful and steady eye upon his compass—an instrument which he may not have occasion to see when learning the science—mysterious and inexplicable in its movements, yet, with some trifling exceptions, an unerring guide—he will run a thousand risks of utter destruction. And thus it is when launched on the ocean of life; though the mind may have been prepared with a knowledge of the right course and of its many difficulties, nothing but vigilant attention to an interior guide can preserve it from ruin. So that, as the pointings of this guide do not wholly supersede the outward knowledge; on the other hand, the acquirements of outward knowledge do not supersede this invisible direction. For as the animal powers, however perfect, do not in man supersede the use of the intellectual faculty, so this faculty, however perfect, does not supersede the exercise of the animal powers. The head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee; nor reason to sense, I have no need of thee; nor the spiritual faculty to reason, I have no need of thee.

But Reason, in its vanity of research, and capacity of comprehension, is ever seeking to know more of divine mysteries than God has seen meet to reveal. As a power purely speculative, it is always soaring above the meek testimony with which divine truth gently solicits the humble mind. Hence, by its very constitution, it is disposed to rival, as it were, and set itself against, Omniscience.

If reason, or the unassisted powers of human research, had been sufficient for the highest duties of our moral nature; no revelation, whether ordinary or extraordinary, natural or supernatural, had been necessary.

But an extraordinary revelation having unquestionably been made, to say nothing of ordinary, it follows that reason is not to be considered, and was not, sufficient.

Therefore, as it was not sufficient, and yet may have its uses, it would be very desirable to know the precise limits within which its lawful interference is circumscribed, according to that saying of Bacon, "Here, therefore, I note this deficiency, that there hath not been to my understanding sufficiently inquired and handed, the true limits and use of reason in spiritual things." At the same time it is not likely that they can be clearly defined; when we consider what delicate distinctions the natural use, lawful use, and necessary use, of any faculty which God has given to man, necessarily involve. And when we come to that, which, ever restless in its inquiries, presumes even to search into the secret counsels of the Almighty, and compare it with the meek intelligencer of the heart, it is no wonder that we should find many persons unwilling to abate of its pretensions, and ready to undervalue the intimations of an instructor so very opposite. It is no wonder that the relation of knowledge to practical piety, though in themselves entirely distinct, should be thought to approximate so close as to establish an indissoluble affinity; and that the attainment of one should be thought an indispensable help to the exercise of the other. But, though they are distinct, the attempt to establish an *exclusive* exercise either way, in the present state of man—as wholly on the side of reason, or wholly on the side of revelation—is only another instance of that disposition to extremes to which we are so generally prone,—a disposition which is not satisfied with adopting a simple truth, but supposes the adoption of it must infer the rejection of another truth; because there have

been superficial reasoners, who have contended with each other, in a spirit of opposition, as the avowed advocates of each opinion exclusively.

The human mind without knowledge, is in the state of the brute animal: and again, Piety without knowledge is a state almost inconceivable; for he that cometh to God must know that he exists. To be operated upon by the power of the Deity without knowing it, and to be unconscious of design, harmony, and order, is the state of blind impulse or instinct, analogous to that of the stone, vegetable, and wonder-working insect.

It is, however, certain, that reason, which is properly the instrument of human knowledge, cannot be more nobly or usefully employed, than in directing the view of the mind to that which was sent as a better guide to aid its natural imbecility.

When the divine author of the christian religion promulgated his doctrines to the world, he referred his disciples to the power and operation of his own spirit in their hearts, and the multitude he taught in parables. He taught them by analogical reasoning; because, it seemed that no pure and spiritual truths, free from earthly admixture, could be comprehended by any other mode of explanation, or find so easy an entrance through their benighted reason, to the spark of divinity, almost smothered as it was in the heap of traditions, customs, national prejudices, and ceremonies. He told them "the kingdom of heaven was within them," but he told them by similes, which, unless they had been rational beings, competent to perceive the relations of things, they could not have understood.

Though conveyed with heavenly wisdom, and divinely illustrated, and confirmed by mighty wonders, how hardly did the light of his truth pierce the veil even in

the hearts of his followers; and how impenetrable were the obstacles by which his wisdom and authority, and miracles, were withstood, in the minds of the great, and noble, and wise of this world! Their reasonings were interposed like a dark cloud between them and the sun of righteousness; and a thousand vague objections were urged as arguments against his divine mission. Hence, because they would neither see, nor hear, nor understand, with their spiritual senses, though they saw and heard, and reasoned, with their natural faculties, he rejected them; and chose the simple to confound the wise, and the weak to confound the mighty. For he counted the wisdom of the world as foolishness; for as much as *the world by its wisdom could not know God*. Wise as they were, these master-builders were rejected; they did not even know *the chief stone of the corner*. And we have many master-builders in the present day, to whom this corner stone, *elect and precious*, is “a stone of stumbling and rock of offence,” as it appeared formerly to the great Sanhedrim of the Jews—as much perhaps, because its humble manifestation offends their reason, as because the discipline of the cross, which it enjoins, is a stumbling block in their way.

Here, then, we have two examples; one in which reason was employed, and another in which it was rejected. As the outward senses were employed as inlets to the understanding, reason was only employed as an assistant in opening the spiritual eye to perceive the excellence of the precepts, value of the doctrines, the force and beauty of divine truth; as far as they could be seen through the medium of outward things. As John pointed to the Messiah, reason pointed to the Truth, the pure witness in every then partially awakened soul. It instructed the disciples as they had never before been instructed,

in the knowledge of a gift, which, through the matchless favour of God, they themselves, and every living mortal, possessed, in their own bosoms,—in the knowledge of a seed implanted by the Creator, the foundation on which they were to build their faith. It led them to the light, but it was unable to do more: it could not impart to them a ray, much less fill them with its glory: and it left to them its guidance,—to self-denial, obedience, faith, resignation, thanksgiving, prayer, and adoration. It was employed as a meek and humble minister, when passion was still, and vain-glory was laid asleep, and every talent was devoted to the Great Master's service.

Let us, on the other hand, consider under what circumstances, the reason, or prudence, or wisdom of man, unenlightened by a divine teacher, was rejected.

It was rejected, when it presumed on learning and tradition to know the way of salvation better than Truth itself; to prescribe to its Author the terms, and mode, and circumstance of his coming, on which alone it would be pleased to admit the heavenly messenger. It was rejected when it did not approach for divine instruction in the docile state of a little child, or in the prostrate attitude of a suppliant; when it puffed up the soul with pride, instead of bowing it with contrition. It was rejected when it put itself forth as the only instrument of knowing divine things, and only medium of attaining to heavenly virtue; and closed up the narrow way to that Seed of life and power in every heart, which could only be quickened by the supernatural influence of the Sun of Righteousness himself.

T. HANCOCK.

BRIDAL GREETINGS.

OCEAN and land the globe divide ;
 Summer and winter share the year ;
 Darkness and light walk side by side ;
 And earth and heaven are always near.
 Though each be good and fair alone,
 And glorious in its time and place,
 In all, when fitly paired, is shown,
 More of their Maker's power and grace.

Then may the union of young hearts,
 So early and so well begun,
 Like sea and shore, in all their parts,
 Appear as twain, but be as one.
 Be it like summer,—may they find
 Bliss, beauty, hope, where'er they roam
 Be it like winter, when confined,—
 Peace, comfort, happiness, at home.

Like day and night—sweet interchange
 Of care, enjoyment, action, rest ;
 Absence nor coldness e'er estrange
 Hearts by unfailing love possest ;
 Like earth's horizon be their dream
 Of life, a rich and various ground ;
 And whether lowering or serene,
 Heaven all above it and around !
 When land and ocean, day and night,—
 When years and nature cease to be,—
 May their inheritance be light,
 Their union one eternity !

MONTGOMERY.

A THOUGHT ON THE SEA-SHORE.

BEYOND, beyond that boundless sea,
 Above that dome of sky,
 Further than thought itself can flee,
 Thy dwelling is on high :
 Yet dear the awful thought to me,
 That thou, my God, art nigh :—

Art nigh, and yet my labouring mind
 Feels after Thee in vain,
 Thee in these works of power to find,
 Or to thy seat attain.
 Thy messenger, the stormy wind,
 Thy path, the trackless main ;—

These speak of Thee with loud acclaim ;
 They thunder forth thy praise,
 The glorious honour of Thy name,
 The wonders of Thy ways :
 But Thou art not in tempest-flame,
 Nor in day's glorious blaze.

We hear thy voice, when thunders roll,
 Through the wide fields of air ;
 The waves obey Thy dread control,
 Yet still Thou art not there.
 Where shall I find Him, O my soul,
 Who yet is every where ?

O, not in circling depth, or height,
 But in the conscious breast,
 Present to faith, though veil'd from sight,
 There does His Spirit rest.
 O come, thou Presence Infinite,
 And make thy creature blest.

CONFER.

FRAGMENT.

WHEN thou art in thy chamber, and thy knee
 Is bow'd in love to the Omnipotent,
 And when thy soul before his throne is bent,
 Ask not for prosperous things; but pray, that he
 Will purify thee with the chastisement
 Of earthly woe and trouble, which are sent
 To fit the high soul for eternity.

It is not in the summer tide of life
 That the heart hoards its treasures : it is when
 The storm is loud, and the rude hurricane
 Of sorrow is abroad ;—when solemn strife,
 Such as may move the souls of constant men,
 Is struggling in our bosoms, it is then
 The heart collects her stores with wisdom rife.

For sadness teaches us the truth of things
 Which had been hid beneath the crown of flowers
 Which gladness wears ; and the few silent hours
 Of quiet, heavenward thought which sorrow brings,
 Are better than a life in pleasure's bowers,
 Drinking the poisonous chalice which she pours,
 To quench our heavenlier spirits' murmurings.

Seek thou the storms of life ; fly not the trial
 That binds the conqueror's wreath upon thy brow ;
 And faint not, though the tears of anguish flow,
 And though upon thy head the angry vial
 Of fate be pour'd : but with the conscious glow
 Of honourable thought and deed below,
 Look to that Power who watch'd thy self-denial.

H. R.

HYMN OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

LORD, thou art the God of time: thou art also the God of eternity! I will sing a joyous song to thy praise; I will celebrate thy holy name. A year is about to finish its course: to what do I owe the continuation of my existence? It is to thy grace alone, and to thy paternal love!

Being of beings, receive my adoration! Thou art immutable: thou hast been, thou art, and shalt be through all eternity! Thy love endures from generation to generation; and each morning brings a renewal of thy goodness!

Thou hast led me by thy paternal care through the year that is now ending: when my heart was preyed upon by care and sorrow, thou visitedst it by thy consolation and assistance. I will praise thee and exalt thee from the depths of my soul, and again commit myself to thy wise and unerring guidance.

Pardon, O my God, those innumerable errors, which I have committed against thee in the days that are past; and let me again experience, for Jesus Christ's sake, thy paternal support. Teach me to do thy will and thy pleasure all the days of my life!

The world passes away, and its pleasures disperse: it is not in these, therefore, that I am to seek my happiness. Even here below I may aspire to nobler joys. I am allied to angels, and heaven is my patrimony:—Grant, O God, that I may incessantly aspire after it!

STERN.

H. SCOTT, PRINTER, ENGLISH STREET, CARLISLE.

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